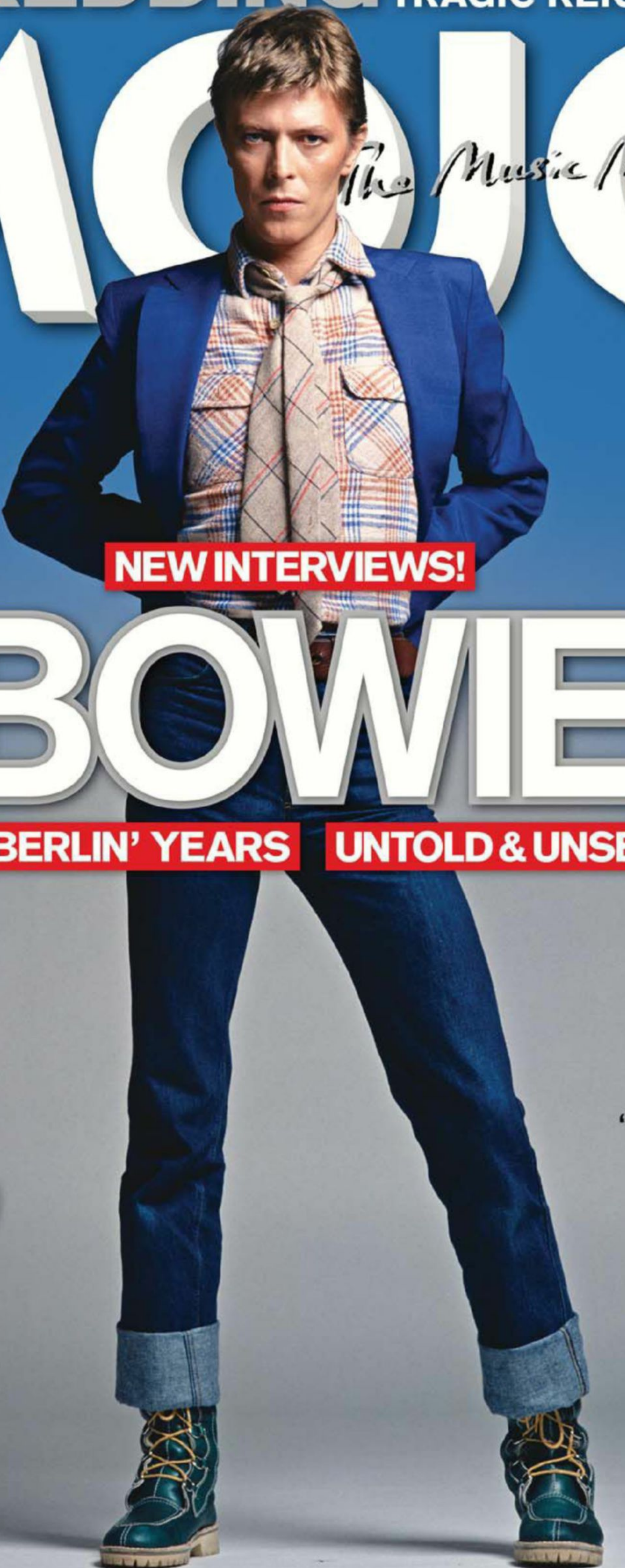
# OTIS REDDING A SOUL KING'S TRAGIC REIGN

# MOJO

The Music Magazine



THE KLF
BACK... TO BURY YOU!

FAREWELL...
**HOLGER CZUKAY**
**GLEN CAMPBELL**
**WALTER BECKER**
THEIR GENIUS SALUTED

NEW INTERVIEWS!

# BOWIE

THE 'BERLIN' YEARS UNTOLD & UNSEEN!

**CHRIS HILLMAN**
THE BYRDS, BURRITOS & BEYOND

**TAJ MAHAL**
...BLUES TRAVELLER

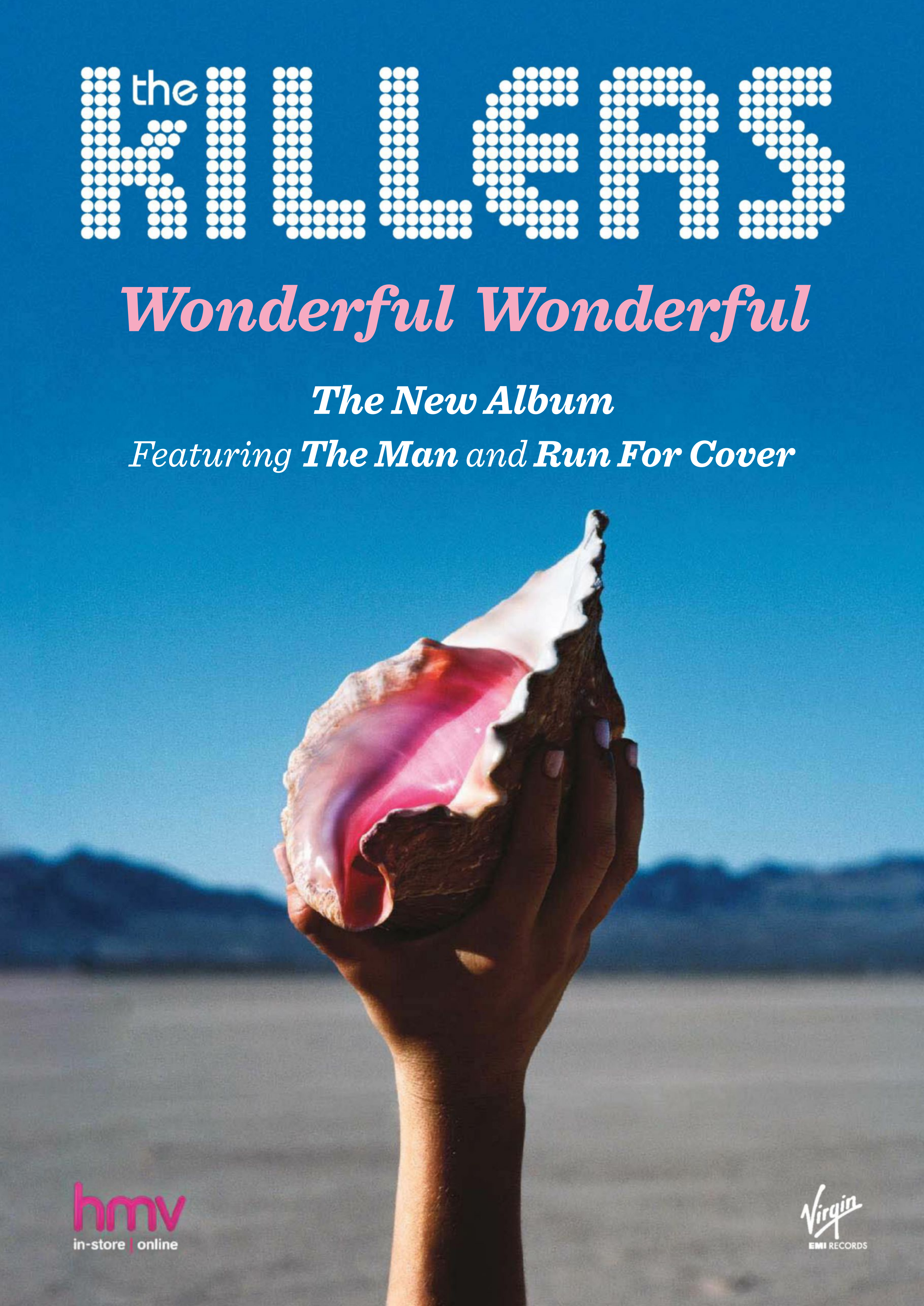
145 REVIEWS!
ROBERT PLANT, ST. VINCENT, BECK, WOLF ALICE

PLUS!
TRICKY
EVIE SANDS
SLADE
LUKAS NELSON
KEVIN AYERS
PJ HARVEY
KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD
...& CRASS!

**DHANI HARRISON**
"I WILL ALWAYS BE GEORGE'S SON"

**THE SMITHS**
THE QUEEN IS DEAD REBORN!

**LIAM GALLAGHER**
"I'D DO AN OASIS REUNION FOR A FIVER!"


the KILLERS
Wonderful Wonderful
The New Album
Featuring The Man and Run For Cover
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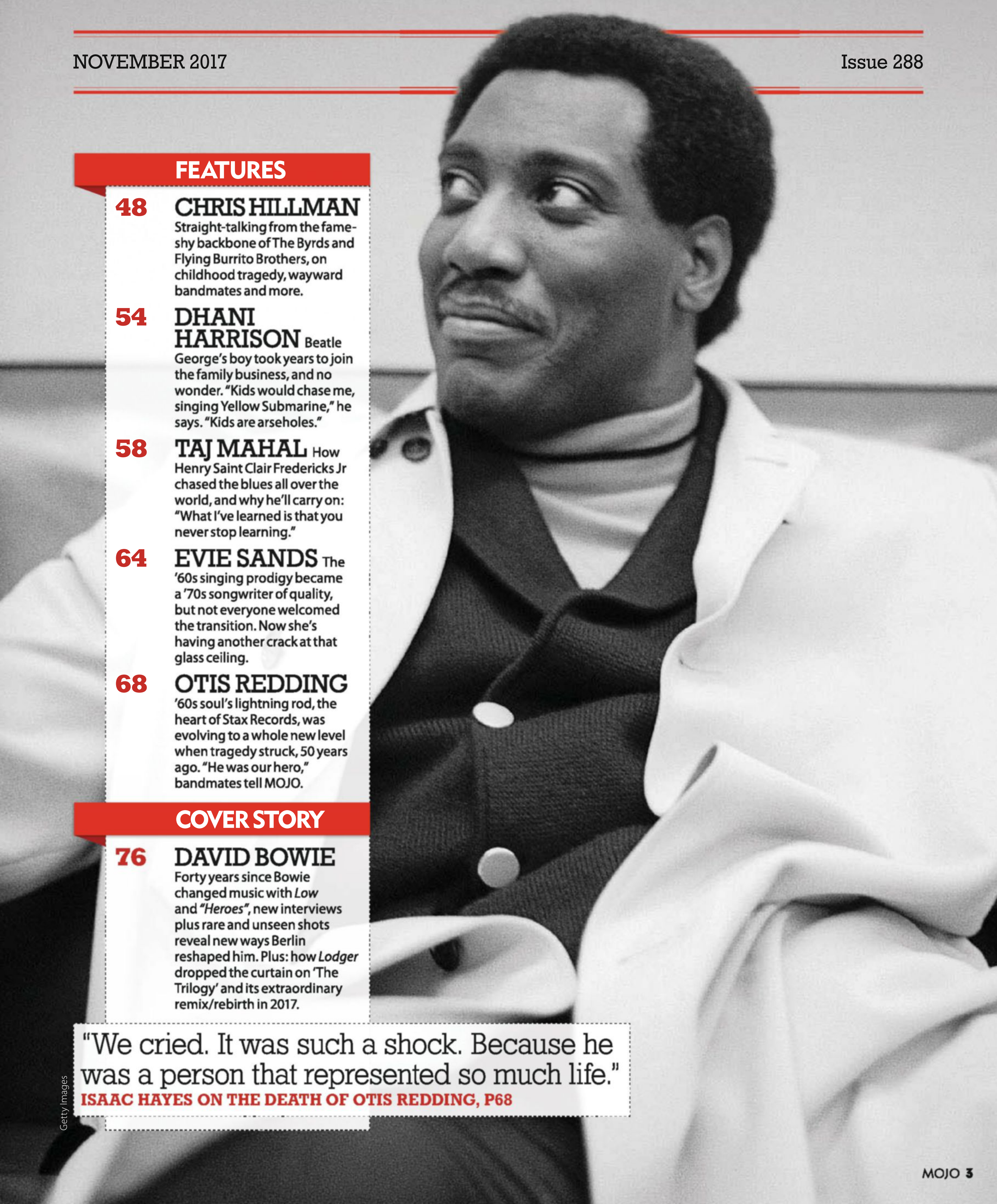
NOVEMBER 2017 Issue 288



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> "We cried. It was such a shock. Because he was a person that represented so much life."
>
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Getty Images

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# MOJO

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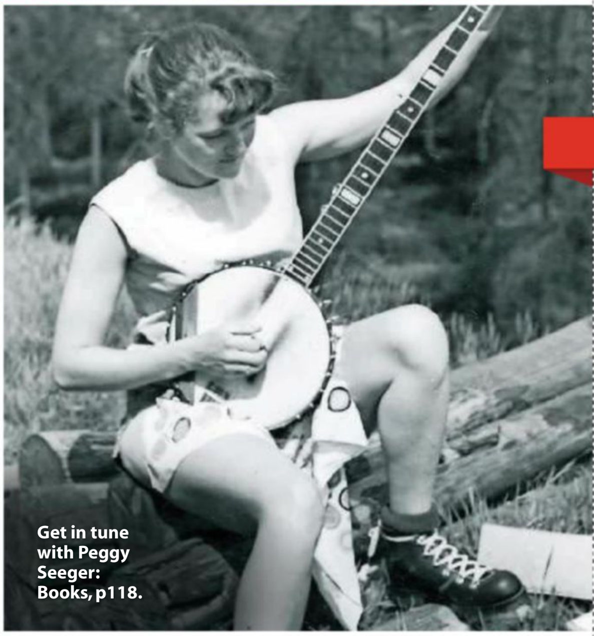
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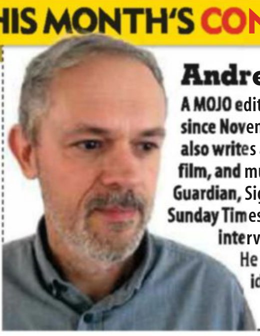

### Andrew Male

A MOJO editor and contributor since November 1999, Andrew also writes about books, TV, film, and music for The Guardian, Sight & Sound and Sunday Times. This month he interviewed Evie Sands. He squanders his best ideas on Twitter @ andr6wmale.

### David Hutcheon

First writing for MOJO in 1996, David is our regular man in Havana (and Tessalit, Traena, Kyzyl, Sana'a, Timbuktu and Tegucigalpa). This month, for a change, we sent him to meet Dhani Harrison in Santa Monica, where he couldn't get his head round the language, hiring taxis or ordering breakfast.

### Rachael Wright

Los Angeles-based Rachael photographed a distressed Dhani Harrison at his studio in Santa Monica. A power surge had blown his electricity and he couldn't watch Game Of Thrones that night. Rachael spends most of her time dreaming about the day someone lets her shoot Steve Martin.

Paul Birkbeck, Getty Images

THE ROLLING STONES

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# Neu Decade

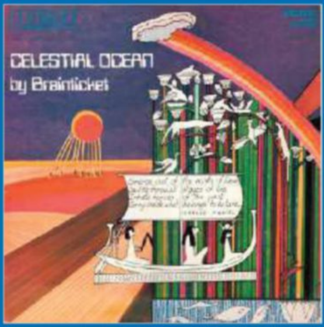
## MOJO presents a compendium of modern European music: 1970-1979

## Can, Michael Rother, Tangerine Dream, Cluster, DAF, Roedelius, Popol Vuh, Guru Guru & more

### 1 Michael Rother
### Karussell

*(Rother) Published by Manuskript (Gema) (p) and (c) Random Records (1993), First release: Sky Records, 1977. From the album Flammende Herzen.*

His work in bands including Kraftwerk, Neu!, Cluster and Harmonia make Michael Rother one of the most influential German players of his generation. In 1977, he was due to work with Bowie. Their collaboration failed to materialise, but he released his first solo record – a warm and satisfying instrumental affair that still sounds like the future…



### 2 Brainticket
### To Another Universe

*(Vandroogenbroeck) Published by Copyright Control. Courtesy of Purple Pyramid Records, a division of Cleopatra Records, Inc.*

Formed by jazz-influenced, Belgian keyboard player Joel Vandroogenbroeck, Brainticket are a truly pan-European outfit whose music cuts across time, place and genre. This classic early '70s tune reflects the outfit's ability to do just that, taking the listener on a far-out, intergalactic journey which, midway through, descends into baroque fantasy.

### 3 Amon Düül II
### Fly United

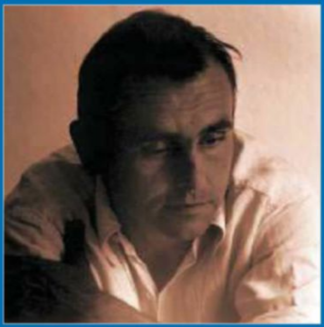
*(Weinzierl, Karrer, Leopold, Kr). (p) with kind permission of SPV Recordings, a division of SPV GmbH, Hannover, Germany. From the album Vive La Trance.*

Standard-bearers of Germany's '70s socialist scene, Amon Düül II formed on a commune in Munich and continued to live together as they set out on their recording adventures. While this tune is clearly influenced by West Coast psychedelia, the band's enjoyed creating heavy freak-outs – a point borne out by the closing, wah-wah soaked section of Fly United.

### 4 Can
### Future Days (Edit)

*(Karoli, Czukay, Liebezeit, Schmidt, Suzuki) Published by Spoon Music Germany and Messer Music UK; (p) and (c) Spoon Records Limited under exclusive license to Mute Artists Limited. From the album Can The Singles (compilation, out now on Mute, original version appears on the album Future Days) /*

Can's ability to blend freaky and soulful is displayed on this wondrous tune, a cornerstone of modern music, showcasing the Cologne outfit's groove and Holger Czukay's remarkable contribution to music…



### 9 Roedelius
### Am Rockzipfel

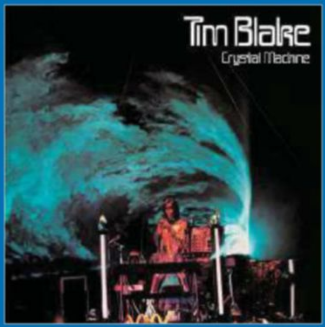
*(Roedelius) Published by German News Musikverlag (p) 1978 Sky Records/2009 Bureau B. From the album Durch Die Wüste.*

Having worked with Cluster, Harmonia and Eno, Hans-Joachim Roedelius embarked on his own solo career in '78 via his debut album, *Durch Die Wüste*, which he co-produced with Conny Plank. The intoxicating Am Rockzipfel, the LP's opening track, vacillates between a desire to drive forward and the need for restraint, Plank pouring in some mercurial guitar lines.

### 10 Conrad Schnitzler
### Die Rebellen Haben Sich In Den Bergen Versteckt (Schaltkreis Edit)

*(Schnitzler) Published by Copyright Control (P) 1974 Conrad Schnitzler/2012 Bureau B. From the album Blau.*

Düsseldorf-born Schnitzler was a member of Tangerine Dream, Kluster (alongside Moebius and Roedelius) and Eruption before embarking on a prolific solo career. His experimental outlook is clear here, while he has managed to influence everyone from black metal outfit Mayhem to US sound artist Gen Ken Montgomery.



### 11 Tim Blake
### Metro Logic

*(Blake) Published by BMG VM Music LTD. (p) 1977 Cherry Red Records . Licensed courtesy of Cherry Red Records. From the album Crystal Machine*

Leaving Gong in 1975, British synth player Tim Blake embarked on a solo career with his wondrously warm debut, *Crystal Machine*, two years later. In a pioneering move, Blake also incorporated lasers into the accompanying live show and made a further solo long-player, *New Jerusalem* (also recently reissued alongside his debut), prior to joining space rockers Hawkwind in '79.

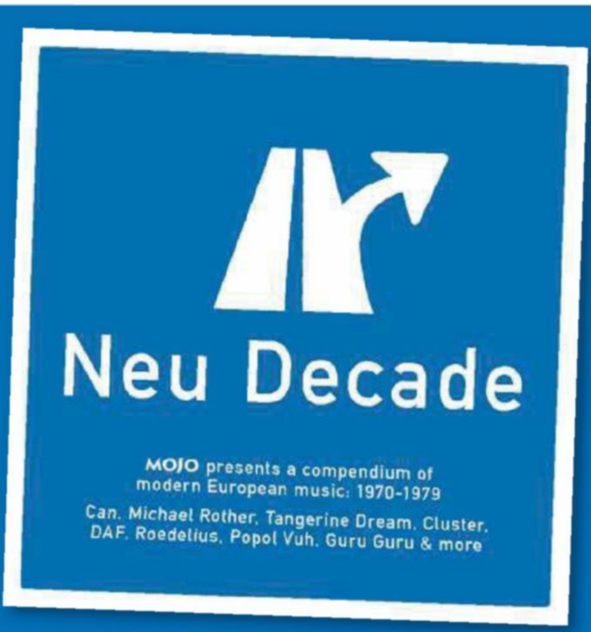
### 12 Pyrolator
### Danger Cruising

*(Dahlke) Published by Roof Music (P) 1979 Ata Tak/2012 Bureau B. From the album Inland*

A founder member of DAF, Kurt Dahlke left the band a year after their formation and began working on his solo material under the name of Pyrolator. In the process, his sound became harsher and darker. He also formed the label Ata Tak, which has continued to release a wide range of experimental music across all genres.

Alamy, Udo Wuellenweber, Ann Weitz

A *New Career In A New Town*, the title of David Bowie's new box set that spans his years living and recording in Berlin, is indicative of the man's desire for a fresh start. During his time in that city, Bowie immersed himself in the culture and music that was coursing through Germany, and indeed Europe, at the time. This was music that did not rely on the Anglo-American sound axis but which came from a different place. It was confrontational, challenging and inspiring. This bespoke MOJO compilation – which we dedicate to the memory of Can's Holger Cuzkay – celebrates some of the music made during a decade that influenced Bowie, his collaborators and modern music as a whole. We invite you to listen to it with the lights down low and our mind wide open…


Neu Decade
MOJO presents a compendium of modern European music: 1970-1979
Can. Michael Rother. Tangerine Dream. Cluster. DAF. Roedelius. Popol Vuh. Guru Guru & more

### 5 Cluster
### Dem Wanderer

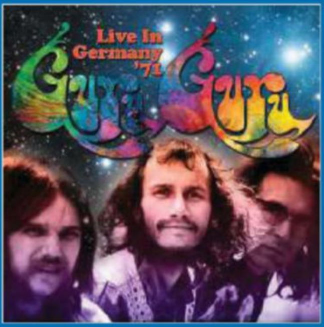
*(Roedelius, Moebius) Published by German News Musikverlag (P) 1976 Sky Records/2009 Bureau B. From the album Sowiesoso.*

Earlier in 1976 Dieter Moebius and Hans-Joachim Roedelius worked with Brian Eno and Michael Rother in Harmonia, before returning as Cluster with *Sowiesoso*, their fourth album. Recorded in two days, the long-player saw them move further into ambient, almost cinematic territory, as exemplified by Dem Wanderer.

### 6 Deuter
### Der Turm – Fluchtpunkt

*(Deuter) (p) 1971 Kuckuck Schallplatten / E.R.P. Musikverlag. Licensed courtesy of Celestial Harmonies (BMI) From the album D*

Following a horrific car accident in his early twenties, George Deuter decided to devote himself to music. His first album, *D*, was released in 1971 and is widely viewed as a classic piece of German experimental rock. He would move far beyond the tension evident on this tune. Today, he continues to make astounding new age music.



### 7 Guru Guru
### Electric Junk

*(Neumeier, Trepte, Genrich) Published by Peter Meisel Verlag. OHR Record, Germany. From the album Hinten*

Like Brainticket and Amon Düül II, Guru Guru's take on music was bathed in improvisation that incorporated jazz and psychedelia in equal measure. Led by Mani Neumeier, Guru Guru have continued to influence contemporary artists, releasing a split album with Acid Mothers Temple and Bardo Pond last year.

### 8 Popol Vuh
### Steh Auf, Zieh Mich Dir Nach

*(Vuh) (p) with kind permission of SPV Recordings, a division of SPV GmbH, Hannover, Germany. From the album Das Hohelied Salomos.*

Florian Fricke formed Popol Vuh in 1969 and, as an early champion of the Moog synthesizer, set his own musical course. This reflected the allure of space, ethnic instruments added a certain earthiness to his sound. His death, aged 57, in 2001 brought the career of one of Germany's most innovative bands to an end.

### 13 Richard Pinhas
### The Last Kings Of Thule (Part 1)

*(Pinhas) Published by Cuneiform Records. (p) 1992 Cuneiform Records (c) 1992 Richard Pinhas, Taken from the album Iceland (Cuneiform Records)*

Fusing electronics to Robert Fripp-styled guitar playing, Pinhas established himself as a leading light of the experimental European scene in the '70s, both under his own name and using the Heldon moniker. This driving tune from 1979's album, *IceLand*, is full of futuristic alienation and a sense foreboding.

### 14 DAF
### Bild 4

*(Dahlke, Goerl, Kemner, Spelmans) Published by Ata Tak Musikverlag (p) 1979 Ata Tak/2012 Bureau B. From the album Ein Produkt der Deutsch Amerikanischen Freundschaft Durch die Wüste.*

Düsseldorf outfit DAF – Deutsch Amerikanischen Freundschaft – burst on the scene in '79 with a debut full of confrontational instrumental noise, Bild 4 one of 12 tracks. Signing to Mute, DAF evolved their sound and scored a dancefloor hit with '81' Der Mussolini. Gabi Delgado-López and Robert Görl apparently split in 2015.

tangerine dream
ultima thule

### 15 Tangerine Dream
### Ultima Thule Part 1

*(Franke, Froese, Schroeder) Published by GEMA / Copyright Control. Courtesy of Purple Pyramid Records, a division of Cleopatra Records, Inc.*

It was Tangerine Dream co-founder Edgar Froese who coined the phrase "kosmiche musik" to describe the new sounds emerging from the German scene in the early '70s. This closing tune confirms both his band's key role in the European musical development as well as their ability to move psychedelia into a new decade.

Beyond Berlin!
Check out MOJO's guide to David Bowie's greatest albums!
Compiled exclusively by Mark Paytress
at www.mojo4music.com

SPARKS

HIPPOPOTAMUS

"A truly magnificent record "
9/10, LOUDER THAN WAR

"Brilliantly bonkers pop"
★ ★ ★ ★, CLASSIC POP

"Emphatic show of Ron & Russell's late-period genius"
★ ★ ★ ★, MOJO

"No end of delights"
8/10, UNCUT

"There may have been many imitators but there is only one Sparks"
THE QUIETUS

"Fresh, inventive, quirky and instantly recognisable"
9/10, VIVE LE ROCK

OUT NOW

BMG

# ALL BACK TO MY PLACE

IN WHICH THE STARS REVEAL THE SONIC DELIGHTS GUARANTEED TO GET THEM GOING...

## Jordan

### THE REAL ONE, AND PUNK ACE FACE

**What music are you currently grooving to?**

**Savages** are captivating. **The Jesus And Mary Chain**'s *Damage And Joy* and **Underworld**'s *Barbara Barbara*… Also, I've had a resurgence of seeing people live, **Grandaddy** at Brixton were great, and I've seen a lot of the punk bands – **Johnny Moped**, **Skids**, **Ruts**, **Theatre Of Hate** and **UK Subs**, who were amazing.

**What, if push comes to shove, is your all-time favourite album?**

Crikey. It's a lot to do with the people I was involved with, but I'd say *Ziggy Stardust*, (Adam And The Ants') *Dirk Wears White Sox, Never Mind The Bollocks, L.A.M.F* by **The Heartbreakers**. If I had to pick one I'd say **Ramones** *It's Alive*, at the Rainbow in December 1977. It was as good as it sounds!

**What was the first record you ever bought? And where did you buy it?**

It was **Tchaikovsky**'s The Nutcracker Suite, from Dunn's in Seaford. I was about 10, and so interested in ballet. My mum came with me.

**Which musician have you ever wanted to be?**

**David Bowie**. He commanded such enormous power, because of his vocal range, because of his cleverness at gleaning new fashions and ideas. He remodelled, he didn't copy.

**What do you sing in the shower?**

I tend to have baths. One I'd tend to sing is Zerox by Adam And The Ants.

**What is your favourite Saturday night record?**

La Vie En Rose by **Grace Jones**, for getting ready to go out. Followed by Born To Lose by **Johnny Thunders** and **Donna Summers**' I Feel Love.

**And your Sunday morning record?**

The same as I'd play on Saturday – something to get me going. Cretin Hop by the Ramones. And I might play Fascination or Wild Is The Wind by Bowie, and reggae. **U-Roy** and **King Tubby**, up loud, plenty of bass.

*Jordan will be part of the Louder Than Words festival at the Principal Hotel, Manchester, November 10-12.*

## Kele Okereke

### BLOC PARTY'S GONE-SOLO VOICE

**What music are you currently grooving to?**

I'm really enjoying *Música Da Terra* by **Batuk**, a collective of electronic musicians from South African. It's interesting to hear how house music has evolved all over the world – there's a familiarity, but the rhythms and vocal phrasing, it's like peering into another world. That really struck me.

**What, if push comes to shove, is your all-time favourite album?**

It's an impossible question, but two days ago I listened to **Kate Bush**'s *Hounds Of Love* and I was struck again by how transformative it is, and how great pop music can be when it *is* great.

**What was the first record you ever bought? And where did you buy it?**

It was *'The Blue Album'* by **Weezer**, from Our Price in the Ilford Exchange. I must have been about 14. I'd seen the video for Undone – The Sweater Song on MTV and the album measured up. It's not the most challenging music but **Rivers Cuomo** is a great singer and songwriter, there are so many lean, effective songs on it.

**Which musician, other than yourself, have you ever wanted to be?**

I'm happy being me, but whenever I see an image or a performance of **Fela Kuti**, he's so charismatic and inspiring. He had such a sense of swag about him.

**What do you sing in the shower?**

I don't sing so much round the house, but Dream A Little Dream Of Me by **The Mamas & The Papas** lends itself to large, reverby spaces.

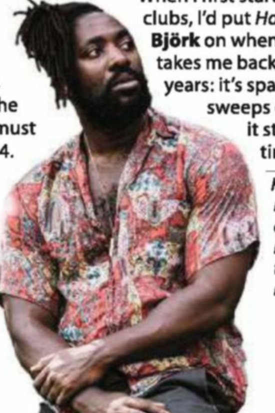
**What is your favourite Saturday night record?**

It's gonna sound so naff, but *The Writing's On The Wall* by **Destiny's Child** always comes out and gets people moving.

**And your Sunday morning record?**

When I first started going to clubs, I'd put *Homogenic* by **Björk** on when I got home. It takes me back to those years: it's sparse and it sweeps over you, and it still sounds timeless.

*Kele's album Fatherland is out on October 6 on BMG. He tours the UK next month.*



Getty Images, Rachael Wright

### NOW PLAYING

- Jordan's Saturday night warm-up is Grace Jones' slinky 1977 cover of Edith Piaf's La Vie En Rose, with Johnny Thunders for dessert.
- Doing it clean, Dennis & Lois's shower songs are The Charlatans' 1997 hit North Country Boy (hers) and Ken Dodd's 1965 smash The Song Of The Diddymen (his).
- At the moment Kele Okereke's digging the 2016 house/kwaito/zouk mash up that is *Música Da Terra* by Johannesburg quartet Batuk.

## Dennis & Lois

### NY'S ANGLOPHILE SUPERFANS!

**What music are you currently grooving to?**

**Lois: Cabbage**'s Tell Me Lies About Manchester. They're not typical.

**Dennis:** They sound like it's all going to collapse, then they manage to pull it all together.

**What, if push comes to shove, is your all-time favourite album?**

**Lois:** *Highway 61 Revisited* by **Bob Dylan**. It's never got old.

**Dennis: Black Rebel Motorcycle Club**'s *Howl*. There is so much soul, feeling, depth.

**What was the first record you ever bought? And where did you buy it?**

**Lois:** Love Letters In The Sand by **Pat Boone**. I was 10, I got it from Woolworths. He was a heartthrob.

**Dennis: Johnny Cash**'s Don't Take Your Guns To Town. I went with my grandma to the local John's Bargain Stores, they had a bin of former jukebox records for five, 10 cents each.

**Which musician, other than yourself, have you ever wanted to be?**

**Lois: Wayne Coyne**. He instils strength in you. His gigs aren't just a night out, you come home carrying his message.

DENNIS
LOIS

**Dennis: Lou Reed**. I used to run into him on the street a lot, and once I said, "It's a crying shame you're not bigger." He said, "That's cool man, I'm happy." On Lois and my first real date, we went to CBGB. Lou was shooting pool. Do I watch the bands or Lou? Lou won.

**What do you sing in the shower?**

**Lois: The Charlatans**' North Country Boy gets you moving.

**Dennis:** We Are The Diddymen (AKA The Song Of The Diddy Men) by **Ken Dodd**. It's happy.

**What is your favourite Saturday night record?**

**Lois: The Mekons**' Big Zombie. I hit the road with it.

**Dennis: Happy Mondays**' Loose Fit.

**And your Sunday morning record?**

**Lois**: **John Grant**'s *Grey Tickles And Black Pressure.*

**Dennis**: *The Complete* ***Robert Johnson***. Sometimes you've got to remember where it started.

*For bio-doc info: dennisandlois.com*

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# THEORIES, RANTS, ETC.

MOJO welcomes letters for publication. Write to: Mojo Mail, Academic House, 24-28 Oval Road, London NW1 7DT. NEW E-mail: mojoreaders@bauermedia.co.uk

BERLIN HAS AN ATMOSPHERE ALL OF ITS own. Back in '76, it was also the place where David Bowie could wander anonymously and, like the city itself, find a way to rebuild himself. This month, as we look back at arguably the most crucial period in Bowie's development, we also celebrate the wider musical developments of European music at that time with this month's bespoke CD. Among the artists featured are Can, whose co-founder, Holger Czukay, passed away during the course of this issue. A full celebration of the man's life appears on page 38 and we dedicate this issue to him and the Can family.

On a personal note, this is my last issue in the MOJO Editor's chair, so as I hand the reins to the excellent Danny Eccleston, I would just like to say that the adventures of the last 14 years have been incomparable. It has been a privilege to serve such an astute and loyal readership. Thank you, and I hope you continue to enjoy the ride...

Phil

PHIL ALEXANDER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## Through dangers untold...

The *Teen Spirit* compilation that accompanied last month's issue [MOJO 287] came as a pertinent reminder that 1992 was probably the last great year in music. Certainly, it produced a generation of artists willing to take risks and make fearless music, and whose work continues to inform the music being made right now. I suppose in mainstream terms Dave Grohl is probably the embodiment of that but hearing the likes of Jawbox, Urge Overkill and The Jesus Lizard again only served to underline how fertile the American scene was at the dawn of the '90s. Maybe you could do an equivalent CD with UK acts – namely P.J. Harvey, Swervedriver, Teenage Fanclub, Silverfish, God, Leatherface et al?

*Roger Stuart, via e-mail*

## Do you want a story?

Someone has at last taken the time to extol the virtues of the legendary Edgar Winter in your hallowed pages [MOJO 287]. So, hats off to Dave Grohl for his splendid observations on the great man's most celebrated track, Frankenstein. Edgar has spent too long in the shadow of his brother Johnny, but he remains a force in his own right, so how about a proper feature on Mr Winter? I'm sure he has stories to tell...

*Simon Bean, via e-mail*

## The Bog Of Eternal Stench

Reading 1992: A high-point in my life. Mud included! So much mud, in fact, that I am probably still recovering from getting near-pneumonia at the festival a quarter of a decade later. And, yes, the Sunday was semi-curated by Nirvana, but I do have to sympathise with Buzz Osborne in MOJO 287. Clearly "opening for an Abba cover band" was not, as Mr Osborne states, a high point in his band's career. That said, Buzz is clearly the most honest interviewee in your reappraisal of the festival. His answers are both insightful and full of real emotion concerning the death of Kurt Cobain.

I would suggest that this alone is reason enough for a full feature on the Melvins themselves. That said, their music and their continued ability to deliver records that challenge and exhilarate in equal measure should be reason enough for you to cover the band properly.

Without the Melvins, the world would just be a duller place.

*Jerry Stevens, via e-mail*

## Is that right?

Great feature on How To Buy Richard Thompson [MOJO 287] but sadly two factual errors in the preamble. RT was not "Raised in... Muswell Hill", but as Patrick Humphries makes clear in Strange Affair – The Biography, RT spent his secondary school days living in the Dartmouth Park area some three miles away. Simon Nicol, however, was raised there and it was in a property belonging to Simon's family where the early Fairport rehearsed. Unfortunately, the 'fact-checker' was on the ➢

< blink again when it was claimed Nicol's father was a dentist. In fact, he was a GP. The house is still named 'Fairport' and is only a five-minute stroll from the family home of Ray and Dave Davies of The Kinks, whose studio Konk is located in nearby Crouch End. So, how about a piece on the role of London N8 and N10 in the UK music biz? To The Kinks and Fairport, you can add a dash of Rod Stewart, early Pink Floyd and the Hornsey Art College scene.

Move up to the '70s/'80s with some bits of Madness, Adam Ant and of course the whole Tourists/Eurythmics story. Dust off the Bob Dylan and Dave The Plumber urban myth, the sad demise of Viv Stanshall, flavour with a bit of Bernard Butler, and to make the circle complete, top off with The Rails featuring Muswell Hill's very own James Walbourne and RT's daughter Kami Thompson.

Keep up the good work.

*John Hemingway, via e-mail*

## Bombs away!

I'd buy an issue if all it had was a single Jimmy Webb interview in it. Genius, bitterness, namedropping, charm, mischief and gratitude in six pages [The MOJO Interview, 287], one of which was a photo! Oh, and [Richard Harris's] *A Tramp Shining* is probably the greatest album I've ever heard. The songs are majestic and Harris works so hard to force his (limited) vocals into the patterns Webb creates. I've genuinely never heard anything quite like it.

*Don McKinlay, via e-mail*

## I can never remember that line

Yusuf Islam/Cat Stevens says [MOJO 287] his See What Love Did To Me was partly inspired by 13th-century Turkish Sufi mystic Yunus Emre's poem Come, See What Love Has Done To Me, but what about the line (and its variants) in the old traditional song Careless Love, as covered by Connie Francis and numerous others: "Come, see what love has done to me" Cat says, "I went, Wow, those words, I love them, and I suddenly got the idea" – but surely he would have heard the line many times before?

*Vin Miles, via e-mail*

## Like granting wishes

I'm of the view that we've long moved from useful musical archaeology to mere legend-stoking in relation to Elvis Presley. This is a process that I feel contributes to the continuing sad decline in the way in which Presley's significance is understood and acknowledged by successive generations of listeners. Arguably, this same iconoclastic process can be seen as similarly transforming the way in which The Beatles are now increasingly perceived.

It was with limited expectation therefore that I approached Christopher Kennedy's article in MOJO 287. Kennedy identifies Jimmy Sweeney as having been hugely influential in terms of Presley's supposedly unique ("I don't sound like nobody") high baritone phrasing. Not having previously heard of Sweeney I was sufficiently intrigued to find some online recordings. The first that I came across was I Pay With Every Breath (Hickory 1014). Revelation. It sounds like an Elvis impersonator. Admittedly its 1954 recording date post-dates Presley's own emergence but tracking down earlier Sweeney recordings confirms beyond a shadow of a doubt that his influence upon the fledgling Presley is every bit as significant as Kennedy concludes.

This is the kind of thing that shows MOJO at its best – introducing readers to new and interesting music whilst also bringing something new to the table in respect of the sometimes over-familiar. Keep it coming!

*Mark Lloyd-Selby, via e-mail*

## Hang on!

After many years of reading your wonderful magazine, I finally got the film referenced on the letters page in issue 287 – it is, of course, The Muppets! Yes!! I can rest easy now!

*Ian M Pope, via e-mail*

## You will have no power over me…

It was disappointing to see Charles Waring's measly two-star review of Johnny Guitar Watson's so-called "forgotten" album *Listen* [Reissues, MOJO 287]. The review states that the release is a "CD debut" but was released as a 2-for-1 with the album *I Don't Want To Be A Stranger* on Ace Records in 1992. *Listen* is a quality soul album, with Johnny's distinctive and innately funky vocals and guitar, that stands up with, if not exceeds in parts, his later more well-known material. Not given a mention in the review is the classic funk laden ballad Lovin' You which any self-respecting soul-funk fan should recognise as the real deal. To say this album is a "fairly tame set that lacks wit and humour" is harsh to say the least. Mr Waring perhaps needs to buy a joke book and listen to *Listen* again.

*Dave Bristowe, via e-mail*

## That is better

I recently renewed my subscription after a lapse, and while not psyched about receiving yet another spate of hoary Beatles, Hendrix, and Pink Floyd cover stories, I was cheered when I opened the mailbox to find young John Lydon glaring at me from the cover of issue 286. A great issue, and an even greater free CD that almost made up for that six-page feature on the insufferable Father John Misty a few issues back… almost.

*Perry Iampietro, Richmond, Virginia, via e-mail*

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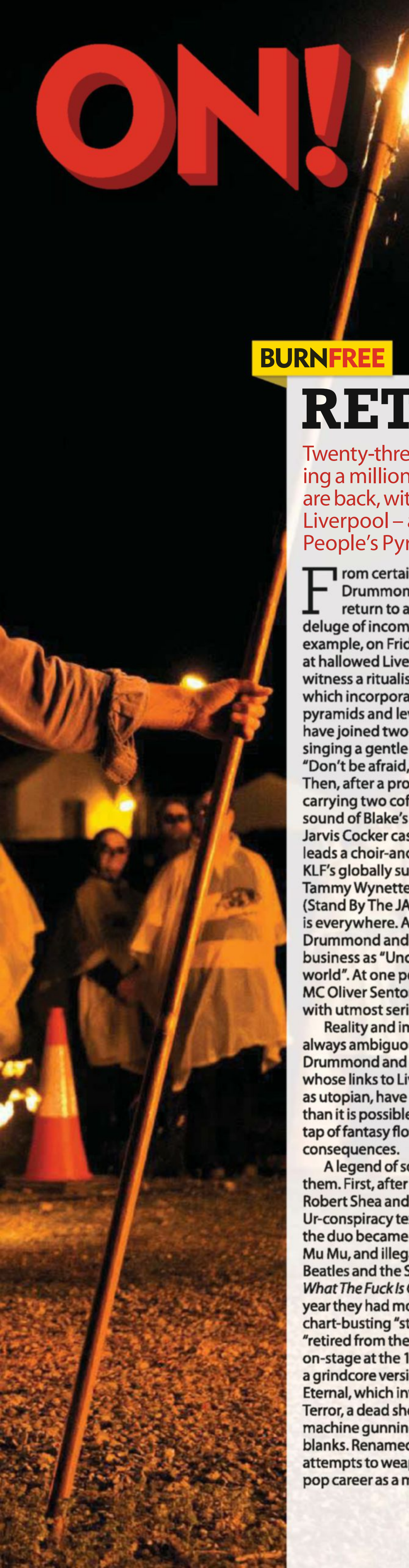
# WHAT GOES



**BURNFREE**

# RETURN TO MU MU LAND

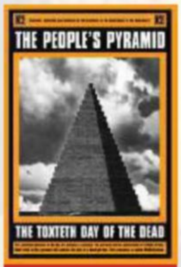
Twenty-three years after burning a million, pop heretics KLF are back, with a happening in Liverpool – and declaring The People's Pyramid will be built.

From certain standpoints, Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty's return to active collaboration was a deluge of incomprehensibility. For example, on Friday August 25, attendees at hallowed Liverpool venue The Florrie witness a ritualistic triple-screen short film which incorporates Yoko Ono, various pyramids and levitating citrus fruit. We have joined two eco-funeral directors in singing a gentle hymnal with the words "Don't be afraid, you're already dead." Then, after a procession of cowled adepts carrying two coffins enters the hall to the sound of Blake's Jerusalem, a disguised Jarvis Cocker casts off his blue robes and leads a choir-and-organ version of The KLF's globally successful 1991 duet with Tammy Wynette, Justified & Ancient (Stand By The JAMs). The ritual number 23 is everywhere. Also, we learn that Drummond and Cauty have gone into the business as "Undertakers To the Underworld". At one point, sonorous thesp and MC Oliver Senton declares from the stage, with utmost seriousness, "This is *real!*"

Reality and imagination, of course, were always ambiguous notions in the world of Drummond and Cauty. Together these two, whose links to Liverpool are historic as well as utopian, have produced more history than it is possible to consume, letting the tap of fantasy flow freely regardless of the consequences.

A legend of sorts has grown around them. First, after taking inspiration from Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson's Ur-conspiracy text The Illuminatus! Trilogy, the duo became The Justified Ancients Of Mu Mu, and illegally sampled Abba, The Beatles and the Sex Pistols on debut *1987: What The Fuck Is Going On?* The following year they had morphed into The KLF, the chart-busting "stadium house" act who "retired from the music industry" live on-stage at the 1992 BPI awards after a grindcore version of their hit 3am Eternal, which involved Extreme Noise Terror, a dead sheep and Drummond machine gunning the audience, with blanks. Renamed the K Foundation, attempts to weaponise proceeds of their pop career as a means to critique art's relationship to commerce stalled. So, they pressed their own personal nuclear button when they burned a million pounds of their own money in a boathouse on the Isle of Jura on August 23, 1994. Soon exhausted by attempts to justify and explain their actions, that November 5, Drummond and Cauty signed a retroactive contract to suspend operations until August 23, 2017. The agreement was painted on the side of a Nissan Bluebird, which was then pushed off a cliff into the sea at Cape Wrath, Scotland.

**Wham, bam, thank you JAMs: The KLF's Jimmy Cauty (left) and Bill Drummond (right) with theatre director Daisy Campbell, August 25, 2017, burning wooden pyramid in Liverpool's Docklands; (below) fire, a poster, a tooled-up badger.**



THE PEOPLE'S PYRAMID

THE TOXTETH DAY OF THE DEAD

> "I DON'T WANT TO GO INTO BILL DRUMMOND'S MIND. I'VE BEEN THERE..."
>
> **Pete Wylie**

A few lapses notwithstanding, they kept their promise. The ending of the moratorium was marked by Welcome To The Dark Ages, a three-day gathering where 400 initiates/"volunteers" witness newly-minted strategies to analyse what the group have done over the past three decades. It begins at 23 seconds past midnight on August 23 outside Liverpool's venerable radical book outlet News From Nowhere: Drummond and Cauty pull up in a beat-up ice cream van painted in Ukrainian script which plays chimes of KLF tracks and the O Sole Mio/Cornetto jingle. Older, greyer and dressed down in work wear, they ignore the cheering crowd, enter the shop and sit at a desk for several hours of stamping copies of their new novel 2023: A Trilogy. They may rebuff attempts at communication, but their book is on full transmit. A brain-searing, gender-inverted metafiction that addresses the internet's takeover of reality, the power of capital and the myths of birth, it stars Lady Gaga, Alan Moore and children's book favourite The Tiger Who Came To Tea, plus a teeth-jarring life-from-death climax (MOJO is on page 364).

As well as the hardback there is tempting merch – cups, shirts and posters, all costing £20.23 – available at the event's social hub, the Static Gallery. Speaking to MOJO in 2014, Jimmy Cauty reflected on the ongoing need to make a living. "When I say to people, I have got 20 pence, they go, 'Yeah, right, ha!' You will always be a multi-millionaire to them," he said. "You literally have to try and make some money. But if you're making art you don't want to chase after the money 'cos then you're not going to get any. You're only going to make any money from art by accident. It's totally accidental, just as making music was accidental for me and Bill. We never set out to make a penny."

Things continue to find more concrete form on Wednesday at the arts venue Constellations, where the Volunteers' tasks are assigned by the MC and co-organiser ➤

Paul Conroy (2), Eyevine

# WHAT GOES ON!

Всі йдуть до
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≺ Daisy Campbell. Having sorted the 400 into skill sets, names are selected from buckets. So 23 "Skull Painters", five "Bishops", some slightly over-keen security staff and many other roles are finalised. There is a band, Badger Kull, with four bassists, one of which is Flinton Chalk, former driver and neolithic guide to Drummond's old antagonist Julian Cope and original owner of the Ford Timelord pseudo-police car The JAMs credited with making 1988's Number 1 novelty hit Doctorin' The Tardis. Coincidences just pile up.

Mersey stalwart Pete Wylie is in charge of Badger Kull, who will play their as-yet unwritten song Toxteth Day Of The Dead once only at Friday's 'Graduation Ball' before splitting up. Wylie doesn't know what's going to happen. "The four members of Badger Kull were asking me questions I couldn't answer," says Wylie, in beard and Big Audio Dynamite baseball cap. "It was brilliant – one of them found it amusing, one was genuinely excited, one looked a bit bemused, the other was kind of studious. It was an instant band, four separate personalities in one second. But I have no insight, genuinely. I asked Bill and Jimmy some questions, but… I don't want to go into Bill's mind. I've been there. It could be a beautiful or a terrifying place…"

Later that night, at The Black-E arts centre, the thorny question of destroying cash is faced in debate: Why Did The K Foundation Burn A Million Quid? It involves reflections and testimony from theorists and intimates including artist Jeremy Deller, long-term JAMs publicist Mick Houghton and superhead author John Higgs: opinions range over sacrificial rites, auto-destructionist art, debt forgiveness. Art historian Annebella Pollen's illustrated discussion of 1920s anti-capital "performative magicians" the Kindred Of The Kibbo Kift raises much mirth and is as good a key as any for Cauty and Drummond's model. JAMs factotum Gimpo, who filmed the burning, admits to considering murdering them and stealing the money back in 1994, though he does verify that the bonfire was "fun". After a public vote via church collection bucket, it's declared that "The KLF burned a million pounds as part of a deep tradition of historical weirdness." Cauty shrugs, "Yeah… whatever." Bill agrees.

**Brick ghastly! (clockwise from top left) the Great Pull North; Badger Zombies; Badger Kull; Jarvis sings; a Mu Mu ossuary (below) Drummond and Cauty's scarecrows.**

"IT WAS LIKE THE YOUNG ONES, CLIFF RICHARD'S THING, WASN'T IT?"
**Bill Drummond**

It's possibly not the explanation we've waited 23 years for.

Going further into the labyrinth only adds to the confusion. Thursday finds the volunteers assembling at St Luke's – AKA the Bombed Out Church, a memorial to the 1941 Blitz – where they are assigned pages of 2023. In groups, they are told to make their way through Liverpool and formulate an artistic response to each chapter and then return to the church where a devised-in-a-day live production of the novel will be enacted, sort of, allowing everyone in the crowd to go on-stage too. MOJO meets Black Grape's Kermit and The Grid's Richard Norris, who have been busy volunteering all day. "I was shanghaied!" says Kermit. "I got 'Rites Coordinator' – apparently, I've got to, how can I put this, be in charge of the Rites for the MuMufication ceremony… do I know what they are? Do I fuck! Get a smoke, and do your ting?" Norris, appointed a Badger Kull 'Super Fan', had amassed 23,000 impressions on Twitter. "This morning I decided to go a bit more analogue," he says, "and started sending fan mail through the post."

The performances that follow involve poetry, conceptual art and music, some of it remarkably good. When everyone sings a rewritten version of Band Aid's Feed The World entitled Fuuk The World ("Dark ages now, we banish light and we let in shade"), Cauty and Drummond join in with palpable enjoyment. The day concludes with a special raffle by page number to win a "secret adventure" with the group. There is skulduggery afoot, though: the driver of a bogus Ford Timelord car, who tried to gatecrash the book signing and had his vehicle covered with white paint by The JAMs, is present and claims that he is the lucky winner. Drummond's face goes from delight to utter displeasure when he realises he's been pranked: immediately, Mr Joe Turner of Reading (via Boston) is declared the real victor. He is seen, tucked up in a hospital bed in the back of the ice cream van, being driven away: when he returns, he declines to comment on what occurred. Later Drummond is heard expressing his approval of the day's let's-do-the-show-right-here spontaneity: "Did you see it tonight? It was like The Young Ones, Cliff Richard's thing, wasn't it?"

The Florrie taken over by volunteers in badger/skeleton face make-up, Friday evening's Rites Of Mu presents a more structured programme, as the film, a pep talk on how to transcend death and Cocker's guest spot inaugurates what will be henceforth known as The Toxteth Day Of The Dead – named for the inner-city area of Liverpool where a meeting will be held every year on November 23. The first of these happens immediately after: The Great Pull North involves all the volunteers and more in a street procession full of ritual symbolism that finds The JAMs' ice cream van being hauled by ropes through the city streets to a gravel field on the dock road, where a large wooden pyramid has been erected. Wearing the horns familiar from KLF videos past, Drummond and Cauty torch the structure and afterwards gather around the ice cream van. There they explain their new undertaking venture: namely, that subscribers can have their ashes baked into bricks which will then be used to build a 23 feet high, 34,592-brick People's Pyramid in Toxteth. All that's left is the Volunteers' Graduation Ball at the nearby Invisible Wind Factory venue, where DJ Food and Greg Wilson spin vintage rave and Badger Kull play the motorik chant that is Toxteth Day Of The Dead in all their ghoulish, fleeting grandeur.

During The Great Pull North, Jeremy Deller reflected on this multistranded, chaotic, inclusive three days' happening. "It's a beginning and an end, isn't it?" he said "It's another rebirth for them, like burning a million quid was the way to start all over again. It's marking the beginning of a project, in literal terms their new careers as undertakers. That makes sense, it's Death, head on, and a lot of fun as well. Like a lot of the things they do, it's giving purpose to a lot of people. I'm sure people here, their lives will be changed by this. I mean, I feel fairly different – it makes you quite optimistic. And it will add to their mystique, which will only grow. They're still one of the great mythological bands of all time, aren't they?"

*Ian Harrison*

*2023: A Trilogy by The Justified Ancients of Mu Mu is published by Faber & Faber. Become part of The People's Pyramid with Callender, Callender, Cauty & Drummond at www.mumufication.com*

Paul Conroy (2), Eyevine (3), Alamy, Scarecrows by The JAMs

# hmv RECOMMENDED

## discover the best new releases

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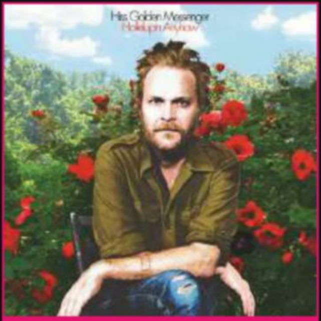
V

**The Horrors**
**V**
out now on CD & vinyl
Recorded in London with producer Paul Epworth, V shows the group at the peak of their powers. Includes the single Something To Remember Me By.

**Godspeed You! Black Emperor - Luciferian Towers**
out now on CD & vinyl
The experimental outfit return with their epic sixth studio album that boasts four tracks spanning 44:54 in length.


Hiss Golden Messenger
Hallelujah Anyhow

**Hiss Golden Messenger**
**Hallelujah Anyhow**
out now on CD & vinyl
The M.C. Taylor-fronted folk band follow-up last year's Heart Like A Levee with this amazing hope-filled new 10-track album.

Ariel Pink
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BOBBY
JAMESON

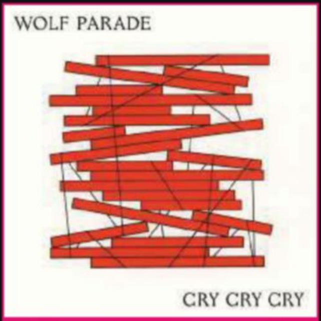
**Ariel Pink - Dedicated To Bobby Jameson**
out now on CD & vinyl
A shimmering pop odyssey that represents more astonishing peaks and menacing valleys in the career of this rock & roll institution.

Phoebe Bridgers
stranger in the alps

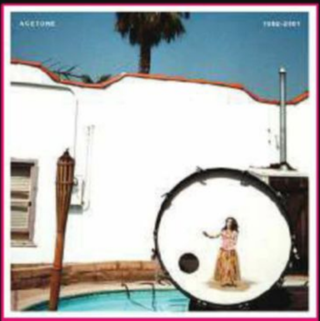
**Phoebe Bridgers**
**Stranger In The Alps**
out now on CD & vinyl
Debut album from Bridgers who spent her teenage years busking in her hometown before recording a single with Ryan Adams.

DHANI HARRISON
IN///PARALLEL

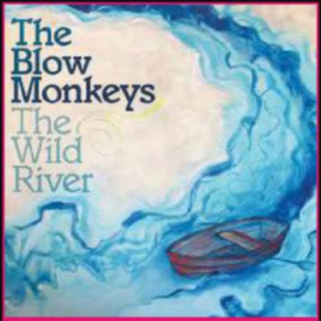
**Dhani Harrison**
**In///Parallel**
out 6 October on CD & vinyl
George Harrison's son returns with his debut solo album. Echoing his influences as a composer, his new music paints a cinematic soundscape.


WOLF PARADE
CRY CRY CRY

**Wolf Parade**
**Cry Cry Cry**
out 6 October on CD & vinyl
With its soaring choruses, rousing anthems, sprawling guitars, and chaotic keys, this album finds the band with a renewed focus.


ACETONE
1992-2001

**Acetone**
**1992-2001**
out now on CD & vinyl
This career overview of these unsung kings of quiet includes a host of rare gems. Recalls Velvet Underground and the dreamier end of Mazzy Star.


The Blow Monkeys
The Wild River

**The Blow Monkeys**
**The Wild River**
out 6 October on CD & vinyl
Produced by mainman Robert Howard, the band's 10th studio album features 10 new tracks that deliver a funky soulful extravaganza.

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kurt vile

**Courtney Barnett & Kurt Vile - Lotta Sea Lice**
out 13 October on CD & vinyl
This collaborative album from two of the most gifted songwriters of our generation is a body of work that sounds organic and candid.

WPC
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**William Patrick Corgan**
**Ogilala**
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Produced by Rick Rubin, the Smashing Pumpkins frontman returns with his second solo album. Includes Aeronaut.

**Nerina Pallot**
**Stay Lucky**
out 13 October on CD & vinyl
The sublime Nerina's sixth album is, truly and deeply, her most personal and most warmly emotional body of work yet.

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# FIRST AID KIT

Sweden's Söderberg sisters return, with electric guitar, more keyboards, members of Midlake and Wilco, and Peter Buck.

"It's dark," says Klara Söderberg of First Aid Kit's forthcoming fourth album, the follow-up to 2014's *Stay Gold*. Picking up the thought, her sister Johanna says the songs, "draw more from our personal experiences than before. They are about a break-up, feeling lonely and desperate and going through major changes in your life, and how you run away from it or try to handle it."

The sisters' bond extends further than First Aid Kit. Each finishes the other's sentences. "This record starts with a bang and ends with a really big crescendo…" adds Klara. Johanna chimes in "…we've never done a song like that before, it's got a big instrumental outro that builds and builds and builds."

The connection is symbiotic but their new album showcases a fresh approach. Previously, they lived and wrote together. Before moving to Los Angeles last year for six weeks to hone new songs, Klara was living in Manchester. Johanna had stayed in their native Sweden. It was a fruitful reunion. "We never had this many songs before going into the studio," says Johanna. "But at the same time we were thinking, Are they any good? What is this going to be?"

This January, they decamped to Portland, Oregon's Flora Recording & Playback, a studio run by Grammy-nominated Tucker Martine, whose credits include My Morning Jacket, R.E.M. and Sufjan Stevens. "Before we released our first record, Tucker was the first producer who reached out to us," reveals Johanna. "Mike Mogis [their previous producer] is a genius. Now was the time to try something new. We've been huge fans of Tucker's wife Laura Veirs for a long time. It's been in our minds: 'Hmm, one day we will work with Tucker Martine.'"

For the first time, the sisters shared the studio with a band. Switching between drummers Glenn Kotche (Wilco) and McKenzie Smith (Midlake), they were also joined by on-stage keyboard player Steve Moore, his guitarist brother Eli and their father Benkt on bass (Johanna has recently debuted as their on-stage bassist). R.E.M.'s Peter Buck contributed guitar and mandolin to a few tracks, while Klara now plays electric as well as acoustic guitar. "You get older and wiser maybe," she says of the shift. "Some of the songs sounded better with an electric guitar. We also have more keyboard sounds, an '80s Juno synth.

"For old-school First Aid Kit fans, there'll be something for them," Klara adds. "And there'll be something new too. Maybe we'll draw a new audience? It is a diverse record…"

"…a little bit of everything," notes Johanna. "Joni Mitchell said, 'The best thing is when people see themselves in my songs, if they don't think of me.' We hope people see their own lives in there. That would be amazing."

*Kieron Tyler*

**Mixing up the medicine: Johanna (left) and Klara Söderberg looking for a new audience at Flora Recording & Playback, in Portland, Oregon.**

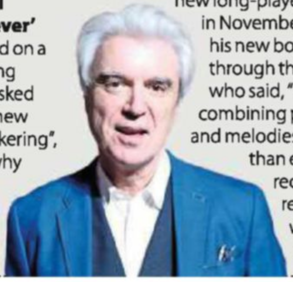
**"YOU GET OLDER AND WISER MAYBE…"**
**Klara Söderberg**

### FACT SHEET

**Title:** TBC
**Due Date:** Early 2018
**Producer:** Tucker Martine
**Songs:** Johanna Söderberg: "We have too many, we don't know exactly what we're going to do." Klara Söderberg: "We have a problem with making the record short enough."
**The Buzz:** Johanna: "We loved *Stay Gold* but it felt very polished, pretty, very elegant. We wanted to scale that down a bit. We had a session band and just our raw, live vocals. It feels even closer to us."

## ALSOWORKING

…**DAVID BYRNE** (below) is working on a new album, according to collaborator **Daniel 'Oneohtrix Point Never' Lopatin**, who revealed on a Reddit Ask Me Anything interview that Byrne asked him to listen to some new music. After some "tinkering", Lopatin suggested, "why don't we make one from scratch and we made a couple". **Brian Eno** is also expected to contribute to the project… **MORRISSEY** will unveil new long-player *Low In High School* in November. It'll be released on his new boutique label Etienne through the BMG company, who said, "Morrissey's talent for combining political statements and melodies is more prevalent than ever" on the new recordings… and remember when we wrote about a new **HAPPY MONDAYS** record being made, back in 2015? "That was bollocks," says **Shaun Ryder** today. "I'll tell you why. If you count **Rowetta** (right), it's fucking six of us who have all got a say. But never say never, maybe 2019 we might be able to get a fucking Mondays record. I've got a teapot full of fucking two-, three-liners, I can give them to anything"… **NAPALM DEATH** are in Parlour Studios in Northampton preparing their first album since 2015's *Apex Predator – Easy Meat*, with regular producer **Russ Russell**… *I'm A Harmony*, the new album by **LINDA PERHACS**, is imminent. **Devendra Banhart** and **Julia Holter** guest. "In our world that is increasingly suffering from an 'Eclipse Of All Love', this album will… 'Wash Your Soul In Sound'," says Linda, enigmatically…



Jason Quigley, Alamy, Rex

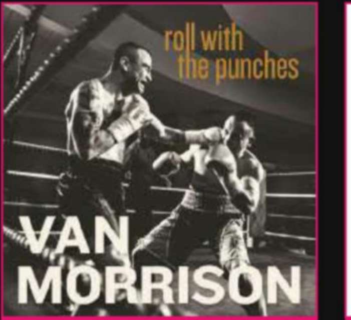
# hmv RECOMMENDED

## discover the best new releases

THE DEATH OF A
KING
REVEREND AND THE MAKERS

**Reverend And The Makers**
**The Death Of A King**
out now on CD & vinyl
Sixth studio album from Sheffield's finest, fronted by The Reverend Jon McClure. Includes Too Tough To Die and Auld Reekie Blues.

**Fink**
**Resurgam**
out now on CD & vinyl
Resurgam marks a bold new chapter but it is also unforgettably Fink: whole-hearted, soulful and irrepressible.


roll with the punches
VAN MORRISON

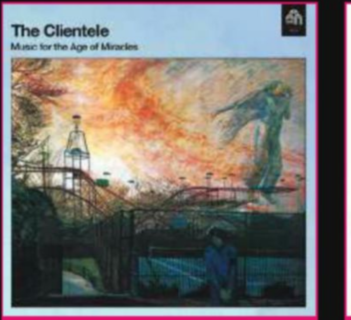
**Van Morrison**
**Roll With The Punches**
out now on CD & vinyl
Van's 37th studio album sees him simultaneously hand-picking a selection of r&b classics and recording new self-written songs.

THE WEDDING PRESENT

**The Wedding Present**
**George Best 30**
out now on CD & vinyl
This is a re-recorded version of The Wedding Present's debut album. Here, everything sounds bigger and there is also a contemporary twist.

SNAPPED ANKLES
COME PLAY THE TREES

**Snapped Ankles**
**Come Play The Trees**
out now on CD & vinyl
Snapped Ankles unleash their debut album. Includes the singles Jonny Guitar Calling Gosta Berlin and I Want My Minutes Back.


The Clientele
Music for the Age of Miracles

**The Clientele - Music For The Age Of Miracles**
out now on CD & vinyl
London indie pop veterans The Clientele are back after a seven-year-absence with this brand new collection.

**Arcane Roots**
**Melancholia Hymns**
out now on CD & vinyl
Long awaited second studio album from the Surrey-based power trio who have introduced a more electronica-influenced sound.

**METZ**
**Strange Peace**
out now on CD & vinyl
Ferocious new album from the Canadian trio which perfectly captures the notorious intensity of their live shows.

**Chelsea Wolfe**
**Hiss Spun**
out now on CD & vinyl
Chelsea Wolfe's sixth album follows her acclaimed 2015 album Abyss and is at once dynamic, heavy and raw.

HAWK LORDS
SIX

**Hawklords**
**Six**
out 6 October on CD
Described by the band as "a study in dystopia and the dark spaces of the mind", Six features former members of Hawkwind.

PP Arnold
The Turning Tide

**PP Arnold**
**The Turning Tide**
out 6 October on CD & vinyl
PP Arnold's shelved album of songs written by Barry Gibb, Van Morrison, Jagger & Richards, Steve Winwood and others.

CARA DILLON
WANDERER

**Cara Dillon**
**Wanderer**
out 13 October on CD
Cara has risen to become one of the finest exponents of traditional Irish song and now she returns with this stunning new album.

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# WHAT GOES ON!

## MOJO PLAYLIST

Tired of watching parking meters? Then get into the month's finest noir-pop, tuff-jazz and anti-Trump punk.

## 1 KING KRULE

### CZECH ONE

Wisps of ghostly, quivering Fender Rhodes jazz glide over a narrative full of haunted yearning that sets the rather disorientating tone for Archie Marshall's third album, *The OOZ* (see review, p100). Marshall's dense, pressing poetry seems to be as much about stoned, cosmic revelation ("Where tiny men have been absorbed for questioning the sky") as with a lack of sleep and lost connections. His muse is rambling and indulgent as well as absorbing, and he knows it: "She asked me why I'm here but I come here every night/Do you need to tell her something? No, I need a place to write."
**Find It:** *YouTube*

**Grog, dog and monologue: King Krule (above) talks it out with canine pal; (below) Curxes keeps it local.**

2 **THOM YORKE AND JONNY GREENWOOD** CYMBAL RUSH
Live at the Sferisterio amphitheatre in Macerata – to raise funds for victims of the Italian earthquake – a sparsely pumping de-synthed version of *The Eraser* song with Yorke heading into piano house territory and telling Greenwood to "turn the drum machine on".
**Find It:** *YouTube*

3 **HÜSKER DÜ** CHINESE ROCKS
Brilliantly scuzzy version of the Dee Dee Ramone/Richard Hell smack anthem with Mould, Hart and Norton at full throttle. From the *Savage Young Dü* box set, out in November via The Numero Group.
**Find It:** *npr.org*

4 **CINDY WILSON** NO ONE CAN TELL YOU
The B-52's co-voice breathes enigmatically over new wave disco for the small hours when the loft party's ended and doubts within begin to gnaw. From new album *Change*, out in November.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

5 **CURXES** IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD
Electro sounds, a deep voice and rhythmic flightiness: this is ideal synth pop for melancholics as they watch towns, countryside and the sea go past from the windows of a train. From the album *Gilded Cage*, out digitally in October.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

"CURXES... IDEAL SYNTH POP FOR MELANCHOLICS."

6 **DEAD CROSS WITH JELLO BIAFRA** NAZI TRUMPS FUCK OFF
Live in California in August, Jello joins the SoCal hardcore supergroup for a run through of Dead Kennedys' toe-tapping sing-along, with special lyrics just for the new rightist bloc.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

7 **SUBURBAN LAWNS** JANITOR
It's from 1980, but this Long Beach group still enjoyably aggravate with this screw-loose juxtapositioning of radio rock, new wave and dubious voice and lyrics. Ban it. Now!
**Find It:** *YouTube*

ROKSAN MOJO listens to all its music on Roksan equipment

8 **WILLIAM PATRICK CORGAN** AERONAUT
No longer Billy, the ex-Smashing Pumpkins boss plays a fully-fledged piano ballad with an aching vibrato in his voice, discreet Indian strings and thoughts of love. From the *Ogilala* album.
**Find It:** *SoundCloud*

9 **THE CRAVATS** BLURRED
Reconstituted Redditch punk aberrations bring a merrily demented drop through the hangman's trap-door, with debonair frontman The Shend eating fags on the video. From bold new LP *Dustbin Of Sound*.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

10 **LOST SOULS OF SATURN VS. MASHROU' LEILA** BINT EL KHANDAQ
An 11-minute remix of Lebanese indie band Mashrou' Leila's track turns drums-and-brass original into a chill-out scene of gigantic size, with Arabic soul singing.
**Find It:** *SoundCloud*

11 **COURTNEY BARNETT AND KURT VILE** OVER EVERYTHING
Associated indie rock teammates bring superior guitar jangling and lyrical distraction with good moods followed by ominous clouds and more rigorous country moves. Their voices, they fit so well.
**Find It:** *SoundCloud*

12 **THE NEAR JAZZ EXPERIENCE** VOODOO CHILD
Madness/Higsons supergroup, with added input from Alexis Taylor of Hot Chip covering Hendrix with breakbeating rhythm and Terry Edwards' unmistakable sax. It's on new LP *Afloat* (Sartorial Records).
**Find It:** *thenje.co.uk*

13 **SLIM HARPO** CIGARETTES
From '59, the late Louisiana gob iron king brings a nasally sung bluesy strut about muppets blagging your snouts all the time. Hear it on fab new Ace comp *Bluesin' By The Bayou – Ain't Broke, Ain't Hungry*.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

14 **WATTER** SHADOW CHASE
Partial ex-Slint combo combine backwoods folk, majestic prog and rushing techno with beats. From soon-come LP *History Of The Future*, which also features members of Rachel's and Tortoise.
**Find It:** *SoundCloud*

15 **LEVITICUS** BURIAL
From 1994, a bassy jungle gem sampling from ragga, soul and funk for its own late-night destination. NB: though the Jigsy King and Tony Curtis sample runs "big, bad and heavy", the notion that is "big, fat and hairy" is widespread, as online commentators attest!
**Find It:** *YouTube*

16 **THE BUDDY RICH BIG BAND** ACID TRUTH
To mark 100 years since the great drummer's birth, a piece of expansive, motoring large-group jazz from Caesar's Palace in 1968, with Mr Rich cool and commanding on the kit.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

17 **SKATALITES/KING TUBBY** SEALING DUB
From the 1976 LP *Herb Dub Collie Dub*, here is polyrhythmic multilayered percussion, electronic keyboards and flute, plus hypnotic dub effects from Tubby's secret bestiary.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

18 **AMERICAN ZOO** WHAT AM I?
By the group also known as We The People, could this dazed organ-driven wobble with random squawks from 1967 have been dreamt up in the afterglow of a barrel of industrial strength Owsley? Even so, it's a question worth posing.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

19 **BRUCE FORSYTH** I'M BACKING BRITAIN
The late entertainer great's brassy 1968 Hatch & Trent song of wild optimism suggests you work longer for no pay, go to Blackpool on holiday and best, "buy a British car". Oddly topical.
**Find It:** *YouTube*

20 **GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR** UNDOING A LUCIFERIAN TOWERS
Approaching on a wide front, here's an undulating block of orchestral-rock repetition with mariachi trumpets, didgeridoo noises and the dry winds of time blowing through it.
**Find It:** *SoundCloud*

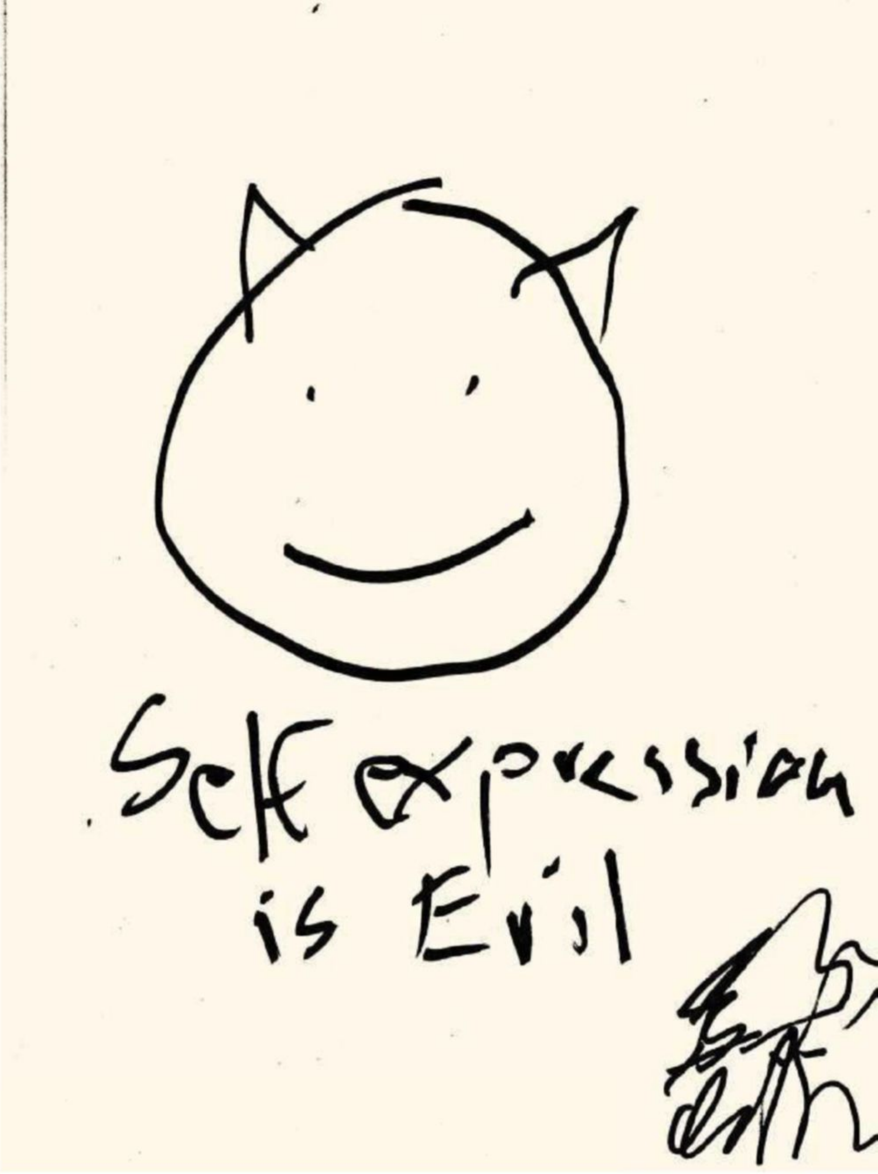
# DAVID THOMAS

## Pere Ubu's Man In Black in his own words and by his own hand.

**I'd describe myself as…** a male, white, six-foot one-inch tall, overweight, thinning black hair, hazel eyes and midwesterner American.

**Music changed me…** it didn't. I changed music. I don't much like the stuff. I just happen to be good at it. It was 20 years ago I had a Road-to-Damascus moment. I realised that I physically don't hear the way others hear. How do any of us know what others sense or how they sense it? We assume everyone hears the same thing in the same way. Not so. It was a startling realisation. I am effectively tone deaf – in an acoustically neutral environment I can't tell whether a musical tone is higher or lower than another. I am synaesthetic – I perceive sound and music in terms of geometry and perspective. I worked for years with a bassoon player who perceived music in terms of colour, which is a common synaesthetic manifestation. When I hear music I sense meaning. Harmony and melody and rhythm, etc, are incidental distractions – irritations. By-products. The simplest I can describe it is that I hear music as if it were words spoken without much inflection that relate a story that's expressed with the language of geometry.

**When I'm not making music…** I collect compact Macs – the SE, SE30 and Classics – along with period printers, scanners, drives, software, etc. I got divorced and that freed up a lot of space. Still, I had to move on so I started collecting plastic model airplane kits. These I can stack on bookshelves. The problem will come when I run out of books of fiction to throw out. I don't assemble the kits. That would lead to disappointment. But I like to open the boxes and study the parts and imagine how I could paint and finish the model realistically. I buy paints and finishing tools but I leave these in the packages to avoid dust or loss. Lately, I've started collecting pens and pads of paper from hotel rooms. I give the pens away at my local. It's a good icebreaker.



**David Thomas by David Thomas: the image dates from Pere Ubu's 1980 album *The Art Of Walking* and hung on the wall of Suma Recording studio in Cleveland "for decades".**

**"THE JOB IS TO TELL A STORY. EVERYTHING ELSE IS PIMPING."**

**My biggest vice is…** What, you expect the truth? No one who answers this kind of question has even a modicum of self-awareness.

**The last time I was embarrassed was…** it's not something I keep track of. It's most often when I have to say what I do for a living at the airport Immigration desk.

**My formal qualifications are…** I graduated high school.

**The last time I cried was…** watching an episode of Star Trek: Voyager.

**Vinyl, CD or MP3?…** Depends on what for. All sound is created equal. The only critical factor is Meaning. What is more important – the ultimate hi-fi experience of an utterly vacuous thought, or a crummy cassette recording if it makes you cry out in hope and rage? The job is to tell a story. Everything else is pimping.

**My most treasured possession is…** an SE30 kitted out with 16MB of RAM.

**The best book I've read is…** there is no such thing.

**Is the glass half-full or half-empty?…** It depends on what it was before the last change in volume. This is one of those questions musicians tolerate because, answering it, he thinks he'll get laid.

**My greatest regret is…** I've never considered it. Nothing comes to mind.

**When we die…** it is as if we sleep.

**I would like to be remembered…** accurately.

*Pere Ubu's 20 Years In A Montana Missile Silo is out on Cherry Red on September 29.*

## MONDOMOJO

…**TAYLOR SWIFT** got the media frothing with her August single Look What You Made Me Do. Oddly, the song features elements of **Right Said Fred**'s 1991 novelty hit I'm Too Sexy, leading to a co-writing credit for the Brexit-supporting popsters …sui generis Canadian **MARY MARGARET O'HARA** (right), voice behind the cult 1988 LP *Miss America*, plays a rare European show at this November's Le Guess Who? festival in Utrecht. She was engaged by curator **Perfume Genius**; also choosing the experimental bash's nightly programmes this year are **James Holden**, **Shabazz Palaces** and **Grouper** …in August, the BBC reported that a South Korean man had been fined more than £3,000 for spreading online rumours that **DR DRE** was going to marry **Lee Hee-Ho**, the widow of late South Korean president Kim Dae-Jung, for nefarious financial ends. It could have been the perfect crime… MOJO scribe **Colin Harper**'s launched a Kickstarter for a limited-edition companion to his **JOHN McLAUGHLIN** book Bathed In Lightning. See tinyurl.com/y8notw7k for more info… in advance of the October **My Name Is Prince** exhibition at London's O2, **Tyka Nelson**, sister of **PRINCE** (left), dropped a bombshell in the Evening Standard, saying, "people associate purple with Prince, but his favourite colour was actually orange." Hang on, what about peach?…

Nigel Scott, Alamy, Rex

MOJORISING

# DOWNTOWN BOYS

## Bilingual, biracial politicos vow to topple Trump and save punki

**How metro can you go:** Downtown Boys are (from left) Norlan Olivo, Joey La Neve DeFrancesco, Mary Regalado Joe De George, Victoria Ruiz.

Formed in Providence, Rhode Island as a protest marching brass band by tubaist-turned-guitarist Joey La Neve DeFrancesco, Downtown Boys truly came to life when fan Victoria Ruiz was invited to take the mike.

With the sax-addled fervour of X-Ray Spex and the righteous post-hardcore message of bands such as Nation Of Ulysses and Bikini Kill, they're here, they say, to "topple the white-cis-het hegemony and draft a new history".

Descendant of an immigrant farm-worker grandmother, singer Ruiz has a preacher-like knack for informed rhetoric, while DeFrancesco displays a penchant for cross-dressing.

"We're counter to the one-dimensional dude bands who think 'punk' is simply some guy shouting 'Fuck the police!' at a show," elaborates Ruiz. "Actually, that's boring, we're past that and striving for something much more nuanced."

Intent on challenging all power structures, Downtown Boys are America's most invigorating new band. They cite X, The Bags and Joy Division as influences, also namechecking Sun Ra, Bruce Springsteen, the Art Ensemble Of Chicago, Kendrick Lamar, and late pop star Selena Quintanilla-Perez, the 'Latino Madonna'. In six years they've refined their sound, jettisoning a horn section, releasing a clutch of underground releases, then signing to Sub Pop in 2016. Their third LP, *Cost Of Living*, has been produced by Fugazi's Guy Picciotto. "The long story involves years of bad jobs, hard work, touring," laughs Ruiz. "The short story is, I tweeted Sub Pop asking if we could be on their label. And they said yes."

Their politicised punk skewers the hatred and inequality of Trump's America. Lead single A Wall is an anti-establishment anthem aimed at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, sonically somewhere between Oh Bondage Up Yours! and Springsteen's early street-level commentaries. Other songs are sung in Spanish.

"Trump is a symptom of a disease we've been suffering for a long time," says Ruiz. "Every personal milestone we've experienced as a band has been paralleled by a *horrible* political milestone, such as the Muslim travel ban. We're all directly affected by the Washington regime, whether through worker's conditions, family members who are undocumented immigrants or reliance on healthcare."

Not since Rage Against The Machine and Public Enemy has a band been so articulate in their critiques.

"Seeing those bands spread their message to such an extent they were seen as threats to certain institutions is incredible," says Ruiz. "But we're living day-to-day, and if the sun set on this band tomorrow I'd be proud to know our music just exists."

*Ben Myers*

> "WE'RE COUNTER TO THE ONE-DIMENSIONAL DUDE BANDS."

DOWNTOWN BOYS
Cost of Living

### FACT SHEET

- For fans of X-Ray Spex, At The Drive In, Rage Against The Machine.
- Early singles saw Downtown Boys offer frantic (and feminised) covers of If The Kids Are United and Dancing In The Dark.

### KEY TRACKS

- A Wall
- Wave Of History
- Violent Complicity

Miguel Rosario

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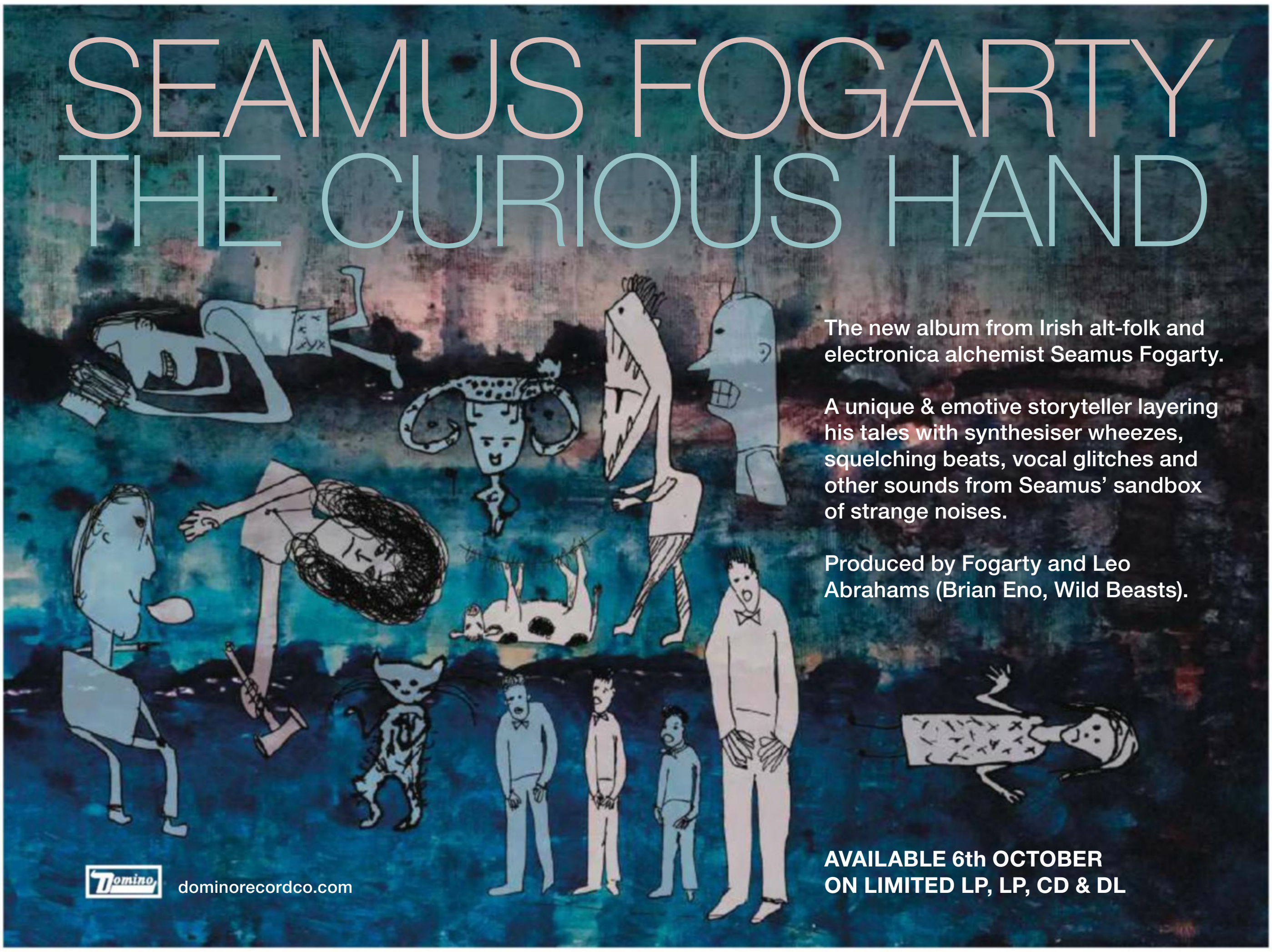

SEAMUS FOGARTY
THE CURIOUS HAND

The new album from Irish alt-folk and electronica alchemist Seamus Fogarty.

A unique & emotive storyteller layering his tales with synthesiser wheezes, squelching beats, vocal glitches and other sounds from Seamus' sandbox of strange noises.

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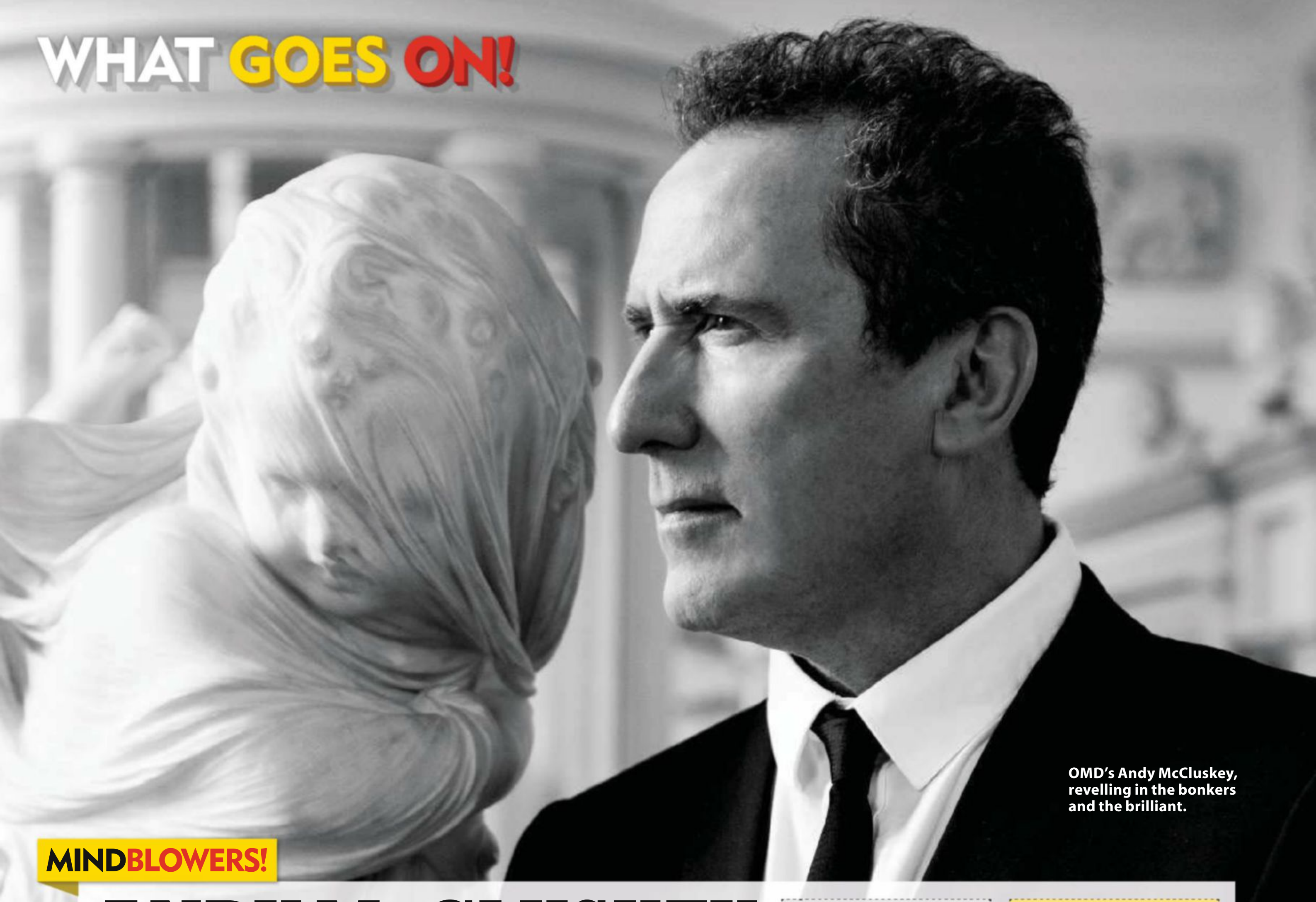

OMD's Andy McCluskey, revelling in the bonkers and the brilliant.

Mark McNulty

**MINDBLOWERS!**

# ANDY McCLUSKEY

OMD's existential pop poet digs garage weirdness, toy dolls and Chilean hip-hop.

Ana Tijoux
1977

### 1 ANA TIJOUX 1977

*(from 1977, Nacional, 2010)*

"Title track from the 2009/10 album by the acclaimed Chilean hip hop/rap artist. She's massive in South America but largely unknown in the UK. Traditional Latin American instrumental loops used as a foil to a autobiographical rap in Spanish. A soft, essentially spoken delivery actually maximises the intensity of the lyric, and it never hurts to have a very memorable chorus even if you don't understand the language. The crossover was assisted by the track's inclusion in EA Sport's video game FIFA 2011 and an episode of Breaking Bad. It's soulful, old school and personal."

HARMONIC 313

### 2 HARMONIC 313 MUSIC SUBSTITUTE SYSTEM

*(from When Machines Exceed Human Intelligence, Warp, 2008)*

"This project from Mark Pritchard is mostly filthy Detroit-style glitchy hip-hop/techno, but this one little track is such a beautiful oasis of text-to-speech vocals lovingly processed and delicately delivered. And I rather like the sentiment! All electronic music should join the debate about the future. After all, it's made on machines; what happens when they do exceed human intelligence? I know little about Pritchard, I just adore most of the work on this album."

### 3 MODIFIED TOY ORCHESTRA GRAND OCCASION

*(from Toygopop, Warm Circuit, 2006)*

"The band was created by Brian Duffy using sampled toy sounds and modified toys. Grand Occasion is probably the most musical and accessible of the tracks. I was drawn to this band's music as it reflects my own desire to try to explore alternative ways of creating music. Dismantling toys and electronic gadgets which were not originally designed to make music, beyond appealing to children, or in any way removed from their original function was always going to appeal to me. Whimsical, charming, dysfunctional! After a long hiatus they are playing live and recording again. Bonkers and brilliant!"

JANE AIRE
& THE BELVEDERES

### 4 JANE AIRE AND THE BELVEDERES YANKEE WHEELS

*(Stiff 7-inch, 1978)*

"I bought this (as I bought all of my early vinyl) in Probe records in Liverpool. It is wonderfully lo-fi, I could barely understand a word she sang, and I thought it was a curious authentic Akron garage recording. I had already decided that traditional rock instruments were almost invariably played in clichéd and unimaginative ways (especially by Americans), but here was a rare exception. Perhaps there was something special in the Akron Ohio water. Turns out that it is basically a band called The Edge backing her. Jon Moss on drums, Lu Edmonds from The Damned, and Liam Steinberg who would write Walk Like An Egyptian. Still a bloody fantastic tune!"

TINY MAGNETIC PETS
TMP

### 5 TINY MAGNETIC PETS A FARAWAY SEA

*(from Return Of The Tiny Magnetic Pets, Psychonavigation, 2010)*

"A beautiful electronic ballad that drifts in with gently breaking waves and a Rhodes piano that I like to imagine is played by Brian Eno but will have been Sean Quinn. Paula Gilmer's fragile voice floats melancholically across an old fashioned drum machine and Theremin-style synths. Just haunting and delicious. Many new young electronic bands seem obsessed with authenticity of instrumentation. If it ain't analogue it's not the 'real' thing. TMP seem to manage a fairly purist ethos whilst not pastiching the past. Perhaps a female lead singer allows them the freedom to explore a broader lyrical palette. The band happen to be touring with us this autumn!"

AMADOU & MARIAM

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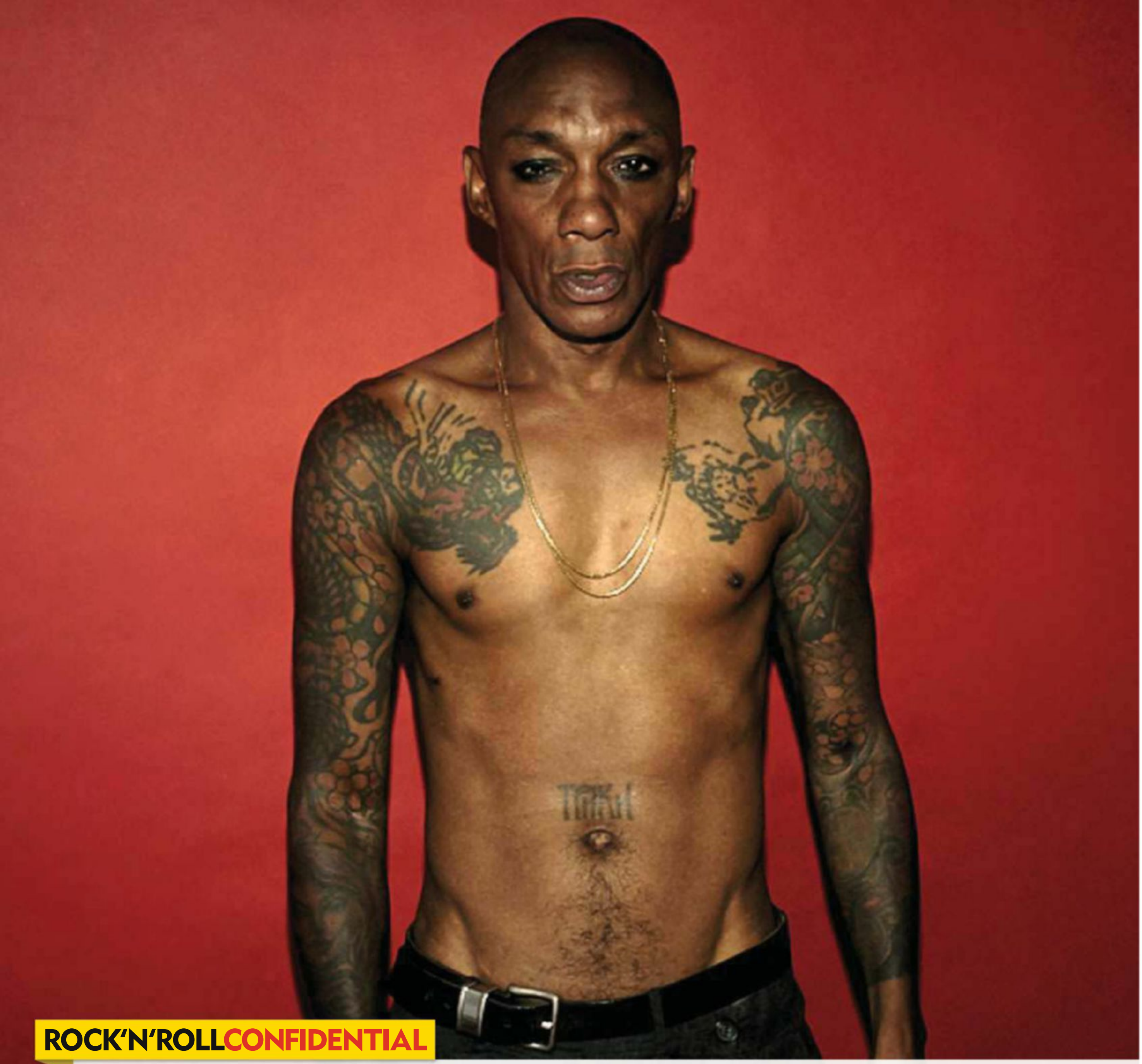


"Now I wish I'd never had them": Tricky's ready to roll up his sleeves.

**ROCK'N'ROLLCONFIDENTIAL**

# TRICKY

## The Knowle West man on weed, regrettable tats and busting off shots.

His bases have included New Jersey, Los Angeles and, since 2015, Berlin, but the West Country accent of the man born Adrian Thaws remains intact. Rather than walk in step with the mainstream, the holy ghost and sulky provocateur of Bristol's early '90s trip-hop boom has moved to his own rhythms since 1995's shadowed debut *Maxinquaye*. After original co-vocalist Martina Topley Bird bailed in 1998 he continued to work with collaborators including P.J. Harvey, Cyndi Lauper and Alanis Morissette, amassing a distinctive discography always worthy of investigation. The PR story surrounding his latest, *ununiform*, is that Tricky's found peace, even happiness: when MOJO calls him in a Berlin health food store, he's opinionated, and shows no sign of brooding. "I love making music," he avows, "more than ever."

**Why Berlin?**

It was an accident, because I never liked it before. Berlin's so relaxed, they're not scared of each other like in Britain. But while Berlin's club central, I've only been to a club twice in two years. I don't do much else, I just work. I tour all around the world, in Russia, America, I see friends and hang out then. Or I chill out at home.

**And you've given up marijuana.**

I'll have a puff at my nephew's, or at Christmas. I got everything out of it I could, waking and baking, you don't get much done. Right now, I could walk for an hour, do some chores, but if I'm smoking, no chance. It doesn't make no sense.

**Happy, or content, at last?**

It's little things like, I have a real relationship with my dad for the first time, and I keep in touch with all my brothers. I go back to Bristol now, I hook up with mates I've known since I was 15, in pubs in Knowle Park West, back to my history, one where my grandad used to play, I didn't realise he was a soundsystem legend, he called himself Tarzan The High Priest. *Ununiform* is the closest I've come to recording in Bristol, in any of my 13 albums. *Maxinquaye* certainly wasn't.

**Is that why Martina is back on a Tricky album for the first time in 21 years?**

We're always in touch because we have a kid together. She wanted me to do an album with her. I was recording *ununiform*, and she called, asking if I'd decided yet. So, I sent her a track, the instrumental of When We Die, to see what the vibe was like, she didn't have my vocal track to hear. And it worked out well. This is a reason for us to record again. But I'm not in any hurry.

**You reunited to play *Maxinquaye* live in 2012, and reputedly hated it.**

That was for the tax man, just like a lot of my albums before *ununiform*. I rarely do any of *Maxinquaye* in my

### TRICKY'S TRAX

Thaws' hot spins

1. **P.J. Harvey** *Ecstasy* (FROM *RID OF ME*, ISLAND, 1993)
2. **Eric B & Rakim** *My Melody* (FROM *PAID IN FULL*, 4TH & BROADWAY, 1987)
3. **Massive Attack** *Teardrop* (FROM *MEZZANINE*, VIRGIN, 1998)
4. **Tricky** *Brand New You're Retro (Alex Reece remix)* (PUMPKIN SINGLE, 4TH & BROADWAY, 1995)
5. **Public Enemy** *Black Steel In The Hour Of Chaos* (FROM *IT TAKES A NATION OF MILLIONS TO HOLD US BACK*, DEF JAM, 1989)

Sebastian Pielles, Kevin Nixon

shows, maybe Overcome and Hell Is Around The Corner. That album was years ago… [and] the fame part fucked me up. All of a sudden, the sound became mainstream. So, it was like something was taken away from me straight away. And losing anonymity is one of the worst things that can happen. It changes how you walk, your attitude, everything. I stopped going out. It became a weird life.

**Why *Ununiform*?**

Everything's the same now, everyone's a hipster. Not many people are themselves any more, like when I was growing up. Tattoos are the same. I had a sleeve done, now I wish I'd never had them.

**Early comments have suggested that *Ununiform* is a return to *Maxinquaye*.**

It's easier for people to think that. I think the difference is, people will get *Ununiform* straight away. I think it's because I don't have to pay off the tax man any more. [Then] I was almost like, "Let's get this done quick, and tour and get some money." With this album, I was more chilled, I could take my time and think about it.

**Some *Ununiform* tracks were recorded in Russia, and feature Russian rappers.**

There's this guy, Alex, he was a kid when I met him. I was doing a show there and he wrote me a letter saying he'd learnt English through my music, you're like a father to me. I've been going to Russia ever since. The Russians are triers, like me.

**Is it true that you spent $200,000 on a car service when you were living in New Jersey?**

Yeah, in 18 months. I was living like a proper baller, I'd take a private jet to Vegas to see the boxing. It was a time when there was endless money in music. How people pretend to live in videos, I did it in real life. I don't miss it, though. If I'm trying to run a business, I'll fly economy. Twenty-five grand is promo for an album for me.

**Tell us something you've never told an interviewer before.**

In America, I'd go shooting, on a range, and I had a gun under my bed. My cleaner used to bring her kids with her, and I was out having food with a friend, and her kid went into the bedroom, found the gun and let a shot off. It went through into the neighbour's apartment. He called, and said, "You got a gun? A bullet just came through your wall, and just missed my brother's head." The guy could have died. I went home, and as I closed the door, suddenly I had all these red [laser] dots on me, from the cops' guns. That was an interesting day.

*Martin Aston*

## LAST NIGHT A RECORD CHANGED MY LIFE

# KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD

Louisiana's blues baron hails Stevie Ray Vaughan's 1983 debut *Texas Flood*.

"When I first met Stevie Ray Vaughan and saw him in concert, I was seven. The date was September 2, 1984. My dad was on the radio and he played many different formats, and I remember him playing *Texas Flood* around the house. Even as a kid, before I could really play, my ear focused on what the guitar player was doing. Stevie Ray Vaughan was very, very nice to me, every time I met him. So hearing that record, seeing him live, meeting him, all those things put me on the path to become the musician I am.

For me, three tracks stood out. Pride And Joy – I think everybody who loves contemporary blues probably sits down with a guitar and tries to learn the opening lick on that. The title track, because of the way he slays the slow blues, and Lenny, which is a beautiful instrumental which inspired me to write a couple of ballads. You can feel the passion, fire and intensity he puts into it. The raw emotion. When you're coming from a place that genuine, you can transmit your feelings through your music, and move people. One of the other great things about it was [Double Trouble, his band] just went into Jackson Browne's place and cut the record as if it was their live show. That's how I make my records, everyone playing together in the room and a minimum of overdubs. That album captivated me and I still crank it up. And there was so much more when you saw him live.

I give him credit for the inspiration he provided me, because it's an absolute fact. I think a lot of people don't want to mention he inspired them because they're scared people are gonna accuse them of being a Stevie Ray Vaughan wannabe… I didn't want to be him – I wanted to affect people like he affected me.

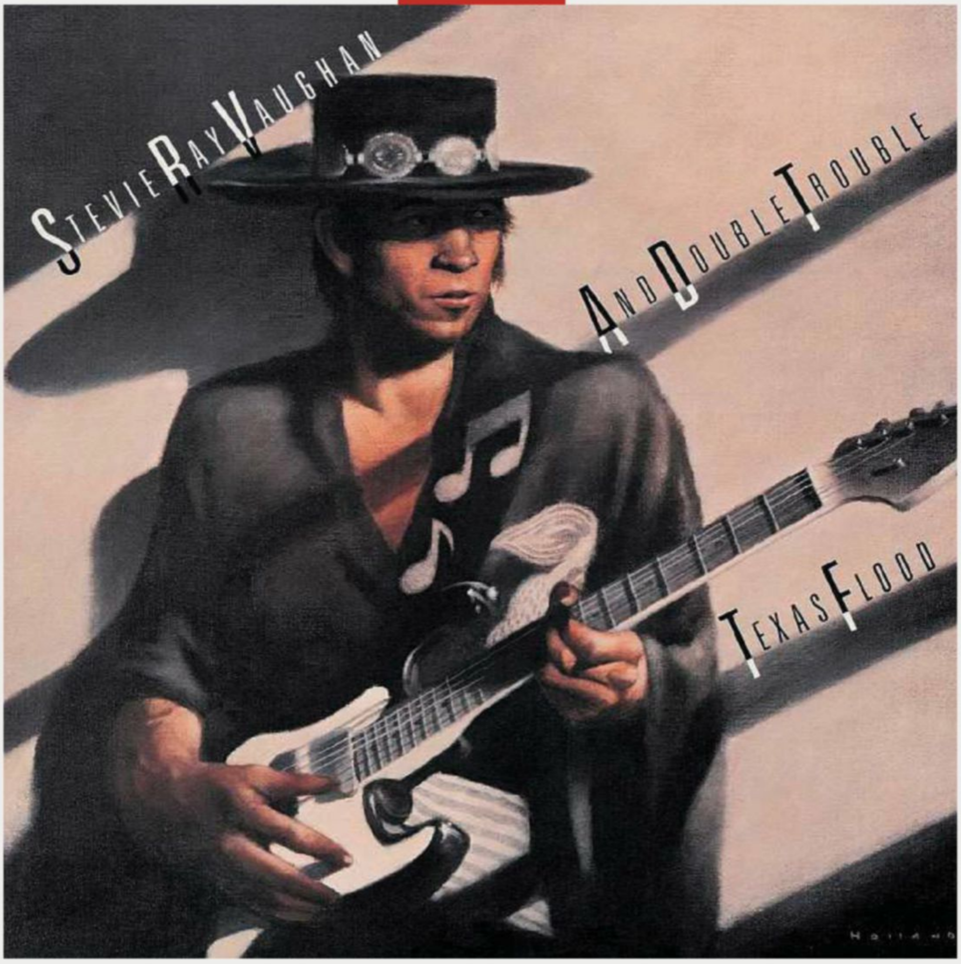
The last time I spoke to him in person, before he passed away, was September 3, 1989, exactly five years later. It was at a show in Dallas. I was on the side of the stage, he signed my first Stratocaster, and wrote: 'Kenny, just play it with all of your heart'. He was always very gracious, very encouraging, very kind. Anybody that knew him would say the same."

*As told to Ian Harrison*

*Lay It On Down is out now on Provogue.*

Here comes Double Trouble: Shepherd (below) flocks to praise SRV's first long-player (bottom).

"I WANTED TO AFFECT PEOPLE LIKE HE AFFECTED ME."



MOJORISING

# LUKAS NELSON

The red headed stranger's son takes the hard road to roots rock realness, with regular smoke breaks.

**Do what thou willie shall be the whole of the law: Nelson scion Lukas, equally at home to Neil Young and Lady Gaga.**

Safe to say, Lukas Nelson had anything but an off-the-peg upbringing. "First time I realised my family life was different," the 28-year-old recalls, "I was 10 and we went to the White House with dad to meet the president. I think it was Clinton."

"Dad" in his case is Willie Nelson, and Lukas his eldest son with third wife Annie D'Angelo. Lukas Nelson & Promise Of The Real have just released their self-titled debut UK album. It's a mix of country-ish soul, rock and ballads that vocally sounds not unlike his younger father, yet hints at many, many other influences.

"I guess I look for inspiration from Roger Miller, dad, Johnny Cash, Kris Kristofferson, but I'm also a big big fan of Bob Dylan, Al Green, Ray Charles…" he reels off several more besides. Unlike everyone else who professes those influences, Nelson actually met most of them. "Yeah, I was even mentored by some. Honestly – *honestly* – I feel blessed to have been born into my life."

Trading on nepotism and privilege is not Nelson's way, however. For every door his family name opened, someone else would dismiss him as "just Willie's boy". "I've worked hard at my art," he says, both defiant and humble. "I cut myself off from my parents for years, lived in my car, lived on the street, busked. I've *earned* my right to be an artist."

> "I CUT MYSELF OFF FROM MY PARENTS FOR YEARS… I'VE *EARNED* MY RIGHT TO BE AN ARTIST."

Never actively encouraged to play or write, Nelson picked up the guitar to get closer to his father. It worked: off-and-on Lukas has been playing with Willie since he was 14. Sometimes, however, 'side projects' take precedence, like being Neil Young's band since co-writing 2015's *The Monsanto Years*. "Working with Neil's a master-class. He taught us about capturing energy in the studio, and I think we've put that to good use on this album."

*Lukas Nelson & Promise Of The Real* certainly carries echoes of Young, couching traditional country themes of heartache, drinking, injustice and fighting for personal freedom in a modern language that occasionally borders on cosmic. "Cosmic? I guess so," Nelson concedes, "but then I do smoke a lot of weed."

The next two years are going to be busy for Nelson's band. There's touring for themselves and with Young, an album with his father – *Willie And The Boys* – and they're also Bradley Cooper's backing band in the upcoming remake of A Star Is Born, which Nelson wrote much of the music for.

"I taught Bradley how to be a rock star," he says. "Actually he already was, but I at least taught him how to sing better. It's also how I met Lady Gaga."

Gaga, who takes the Judy Garland/Barbra Streisand role opposite Cooper, sings on two *…Promise Of The Real* tracks. An unlikely pairing to some, but not Nelson. "Well, if dad can do a reggae album I can work with Lady Gaga."

Speaking of dad, who's the better guitar player?

"Oh well, Dad's had a couple of years on me," Nelson laughs, "so I think he's definitely got that. Maybe when I'm 84 I'll surpass him, but I dunno."

*Andy Fyfe*

LUKAS NELSON & PROMISE OF THE REAL

## FACT SHEET

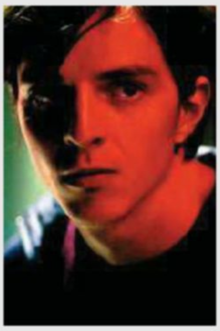
- Lukas Nelson & Promise Of The Real began when Nelson met drummer Anthony LoGerfo at a Neil Young gig in 2010. Their name hails from a Young lyric ("Some get stoned/Some get strange/ But sooner or later, it all gets real" – Walk On). They've been NY's band for two years and just finished his next LP.
- Away from music Nelson skateboards, surfs, plays golf. A golf buddy is dad's Maui neighbour, Alice Cooper.

## KEY TRACKS

- Set Me Down On A Cloud
- Find Yourself (with Lady Gaga)
- If I Started Over

## ALSORISING

"I grew up in Dagenham but I've always been interested in exploring the music of my Caribbean heritage," says singer-songwriter, **ZARA McFARLANE**. The soulful-voiced 33-year-old, who cites **Nina Simone**, **Luther Vandross**, and **Bob Marley** as major influences, won Best Jazz Act award at the 2014 MOBOs. Now, with the help of producer/drummer Moses Boyd, her vision of fusing jazz with reggae and Jamaican folk music comes to fruition on *Arise* (Brownswood), her third and most impressive album to date. "I think out of all my records so far it's the most accessible," she says, "and I hope it's something that people can connect with." *Charles Waring*



"Mistakes," says Lithuanian producer Ernestas Kaušylas, "are very welcome in my music." His music as **BROKENCHORD** draws on many things, from **Burial**'s 21st century melancholy and the shimmering spaciousness of **King Tubby** to the rolling hypnosis of **Can** and the grind of **The Stooges**, all united by "a quality of being used, worn out, broken, distorted". Early support from **Bonobo** (whom he supported) and **Radiohead** (he remixed them) just "gave me more confidence to trust my own gut" – and on his debut album *Endless Transmission* (Black Acre) it certainly shows, and then some. A thing of peculiar wonder, it's one of 2017's finest releases, and that is no mistake. *Joe Muggs*

Myriam Santos

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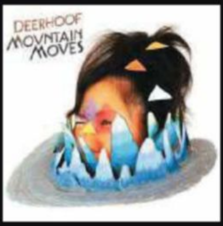

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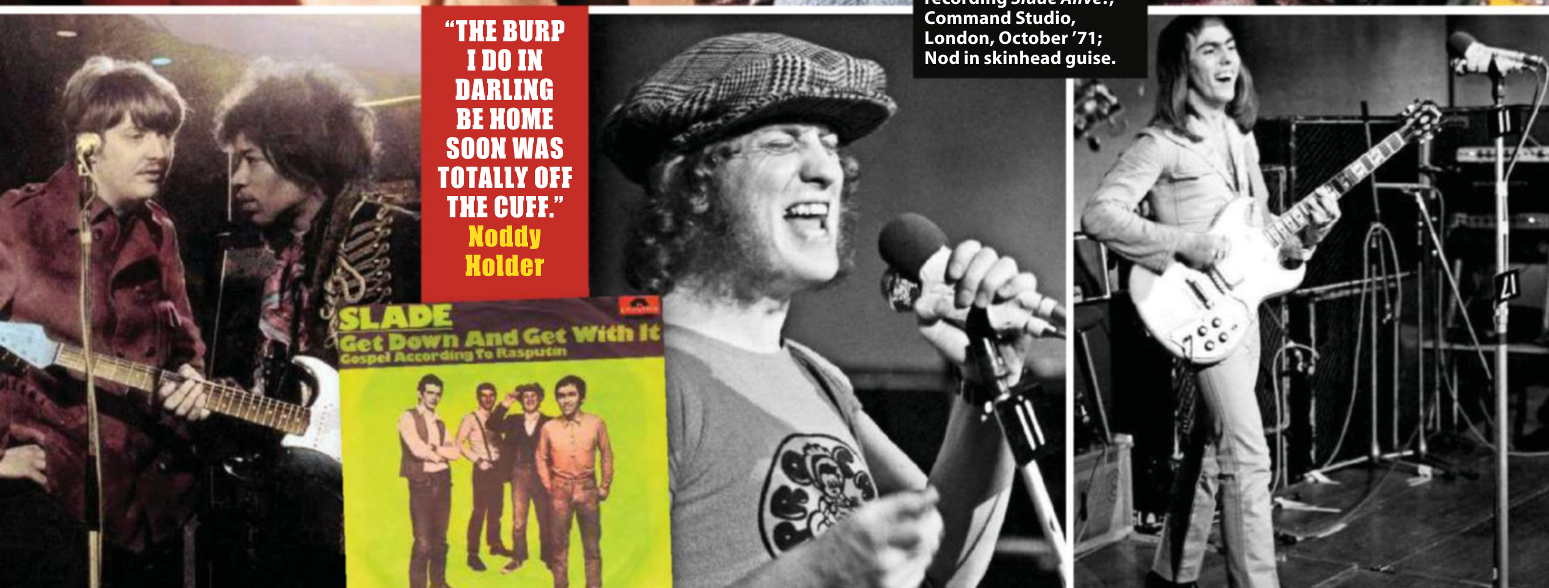
MOJO EYEWITNESS

# *SLADE ALIVE!* SENDS THE SUPER-YOBS INTERNATIONAL, 1972

After battering the Top 10 with Coz I Luv You, Wolverhampton's glam bruisers decided to boot fame's doors in once and for all with a live album, recorded for just 600 quid. The explosion was deafening – but what really went on?

**"THE BURP I DO IN DARLING BE HOME SOON WAS TOTALLY OFF THE CUFF."** Noddy Holder



**Going Crazee: (from left) Slade manager Chas Chandler with former charge Jimi Hendrix; the breakthrough hit; Nod, Dave, Jim, Don, recording *Slade Alive!*, Command Studio, London, October '71; Nod in skinhead guise.**

SLADE ALIVE!
Polydor
MADE IN ENGLAND
Barn Music/Schroeder Music
2058-155 A
℗ 1971
2058-155
COZ I LUV YOU
(Holder-Lea)
SLADE
Produced by Chas. Chandler for Barn Productions

**Cry, Wolverhampton: Slade in '72 (from left) Noddy Holder, Jim Lea, Dave Hill and Don Powell, with *Slade Alive!* and (below) hit 45.**

## PART 1 "WE WERE REALLY BUZZING."

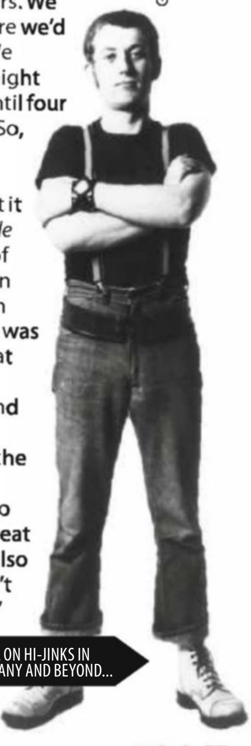
### Slade frontman Noddy Holder remembers colour, earthiness and a roomful of screaming fans.

**Noddy Holder:** "We'd had a couple of albums out by this stage but not much had happened. I was still living at my parents' house in Walsall. We'd been struggling to get a hit record and then we'd had a breakthrough single in the middle of 1971, with Get Down And Get With It – an old Northern soul song [by American singer-songwriter Bobby Marchan] that had been the barnstormer closer of our set for years. This was our manager Chas Chandler's idea. He reckoned it summed up Slade in three minutes and it became our first hit. Before then we'd done nothing. Because of his success as manager of Jimi Hendrix, people had said to Chas, You should give up on this lot, but he wouldn't.

Chas then told us we had to start writing our own material and me and Jim [Lea, Slade bassist/violinist] came up with the next single, which was Coz I Luv You. We came up with it in about 20 minutes. When we first played Chas the song, just on acoustic and violin, he told us we'd written our first Number 1 and again he'd be proved right. But the record company were crying out for a new album, so Chas thought that, on the back of Get Down And Get With It, we could do a live album. Chas booked three nights at Command Studios in Piccadilly in London [in October 1971]. The bulk of the album turned out to be from the second night. On the second night we'd done our first Top Of The Pops recording for Coz I Luv You, which looked like it was going to zoom up the charts. We then went straight to Command Studios from Top Of The Pops, changing on the way. We were on a real high, really buzzing, and it showed in the performance.

I'd been singing in working men's clubs since 1953, since I was seven years old, and I just did what came naturally and what I'd heard on records by people like Little Richard. We wanted [*Slade Alive!*] to be raw and live – not all touched up afterwards. It was recorded in October and released early the next year. We also knew the image was important. Me and Dave [Hill, Slade guitarist] worked a lot on clothes. We knew we needed colour – to get on TV. We'd had our skinhead phase at the end of the '60s and we had trouble getting on TV or even on radio. Around the time of *Slade Alive!* we were losing the skinhead image but we kept the cut-off jeans. We grew our hair long at the sides but kept it cropped on top, like the skinhead girls. We knew we'd make an impression if we could get on TV – they'd be talking about us the next day even if they didn't like the music.

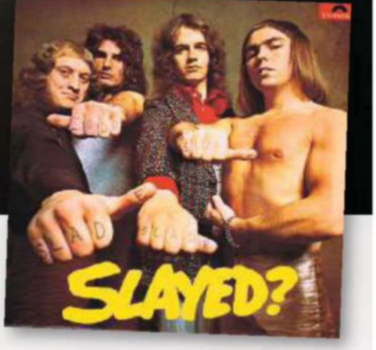
Getty Images (7)



The album closes with a cover of Steppenwolf's Born To Be Wild which we'd been doing for years. We picked that song up in the Bahamas, where we'd been booked to play a stint at this club. We played to American kids until about midnight and then we'd play to a black audience until four in the morning – Motown, James Brown. So, up to midnight we played the stuff the American kids wanted and that included Born To Be Wild. People in the UK thought it was our song. There are some bits of [*Slade Alive!*] that really capture the earthiness of Slade – like the burp I do in the quiet bit on Darling Be Home Soon, the ballad by John Sebastian from The Lovin' Spoonful. That was totally off the cuff, but then I had to do it at every show because people expected it.

*Slade Alive!* was such a smash, all around the world. It was a huge hit in Australia… Canada, all across Europe. It was Top 5 in the UK for 13 months. To have an album that summed up what Slade were about and to be so successful commercially was just great for us. We had our daft side but we were also serious. We'd had years doing this, it didn't happen by accident. Our time had come."

TURNOVER! DRUMMER DON POWELL ON HI-JINKS IN AUSTRALIA, EAST GERMANY AND BEYOND…



## PART 2 "IT BECAME A ROLLERCOASTER."

# *SLADE ALIVE!* SENDS THE SUPER-YOBS INTERNATIONAL, 1972

From the Black Country to the world: Slade on home-from-home Top Of The Pops, August '72; (right) next hit LP, *Slayed?*; (below) Don Powell amid vinyl and an Australian tour poster.

Slade drummer Don Powell dodges the flying bog rolls for bottled ales, TOTP tales and global Slademania.

**Don Powell:** "The Coz I Luv You single went to Number 1 in [October] 1971 and then *Slade Alive!* hit the charts [in March 1972] and it all became a rollercoaster. Wherever we go in the world, even now, that is the album everybody talks about. It worked fantastically well and that was all down to Chas, because it was his idea. You hear it cost £600 to make, but I'd be surprised if it cost even that much.

When we recorded it I was still living with my mum and dad, back in Bilston, Wolverhampton – it wasn't until 1973 that we started getting our own places. We went all over the world after *Slade Alive!* and had queues around the block. It was unbelievable. I remember being told it had outsold *Sgt. Pepper* in Australia. We went and played all these cricket stadiums in Sydney and Brisbane – a great package with us, Quo, Lindisfarne and Caravan, about 60,000 per gig. When we went to Adelaide it hadn't rained at that time of year for 30 years. The day we went it poured down. We brought a bit of Wolverhampton with us… I was in Australia recently and so many people came up to me with *Slade Alive!* to sign.

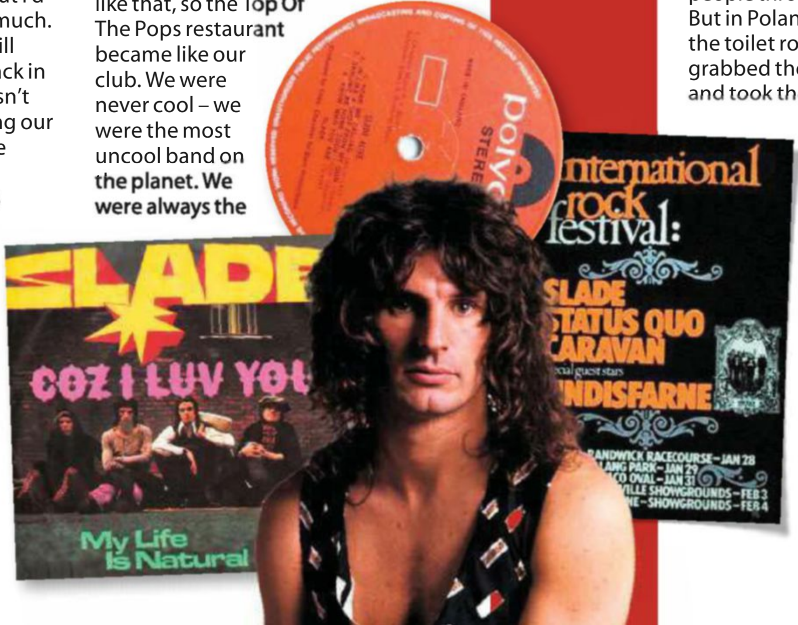
After *Slade Alive!* we had the *Slayed?* album [released November 1972] taking over. It was like a relay race. Top Of The Pops became like our London club where we'd meet everyone in the bar afterwards and catch up – Tom Jones and Elton John and Roy Wood. They used to call us the resident band and we got to know everybody. We'd never go to a private members' club in London or anything like that, so the Top Of The Pops restaurant became like our club. We were never cool – we were the most uncool band on the planet. We were always the first to arrive at a party or an album launch and always the last to leave.

"WE WERE THE MOST UNCOOL BAND ON THE PLANET."

We had the six Number 1s within two years and were charging around everywhere. I remember playing a TV show in East Berlin, under communist rule. This guy came up shouting at me and pushed me out of the studio. It was because I was chewing gum, which was seen as a decadent habit from the West. I had to hand my chewing gum over to the guard. Later we played in Poland – kids down the front and mums and dads with shopping baskets. We used to do this thing where we'd get toilet rolls and throw them into the audience to have this kind of streamer effect, with people throwing them back and forth. But in Poland the audience thought the toilet rolls were a present. They grabbed them, put them in their bags and took them home.

*Slade Alive!* did really capture the essence of Slade, and it worked out better than we could ever have expected. Did we celebrate when we'd finished the album? We probably went back to the hotel and had a bottle of ale – which was more Slade than 10 bottles of champagne."

*As told to Roy Wilkinson*



*Slade Alive! is reissued by BMG on September 29 on 180g vinyl and deluxe CD.*

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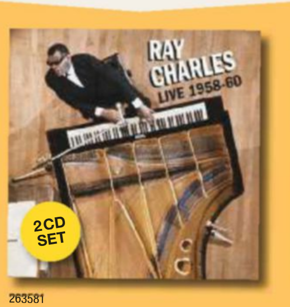

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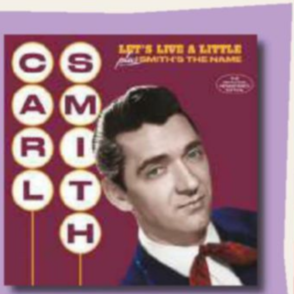

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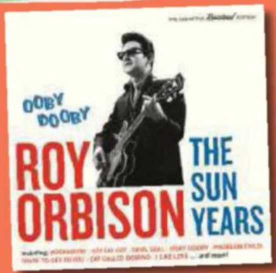

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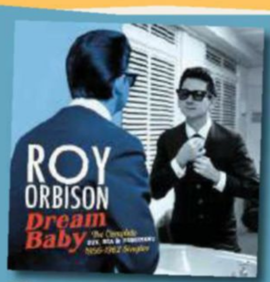

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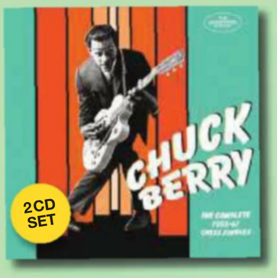

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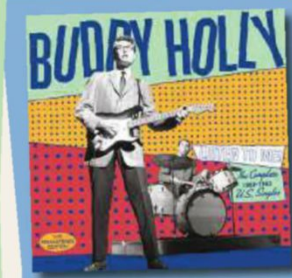

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Come fly with me
FRANK SINATRA
FRANK SINATRA sings for only the lonely

Crying time again: Frank Sinatra in '58; (above) with arranger Nelson Riddle; (insets right) a Grammy and his hit LPs of the year.

**TIMEMACHINE**

# OCTOBER 1958 ...SINATRA SINGS FOR ONLY THE LONELY

**OCTOBER 13** Album-wise, 1958 was a very good year indeed for Frank Sinatra. In the States he'd logged his first chart-topping long-player in *Come Fly With Me*, while two retrospective album releases also nudged their way into the Top 20. Additionally, on October 13 that year, *Frank Sinatra Sings For Only The Lonely* took up residency at the apex of the chart, a position it held for the following five weeks.

Gloriously doom-laden and filled with such tear-stained material as Willow Weep For Me, One For My Baby, Blues In The Night, It's A Lonesome Old Town and Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out To Dry, the album was hardly conceived under the best of circumstances. Nelson Riddle, who wrote the arrangements and shared orchestra conducting duties with Felix Slatkin, was enduring a year steeped in tragedy. His six-month-old daughter, Lenora, had died from bronchial asthma, while his mother died from cancer just four days after the first *Only The Lonely* sessions took place on May 29.

Sinatra himself was not in the most approachable of moods. Trombone player George Roberts recollected the singer being unpredictable during the sessions, saying Riddle, "was frightened of Frank, not physically, but because he could be in one mood and turn around and be in a completely different mood. That scared him because when he arranged something, he wasn't sure if Frank was going to like it."

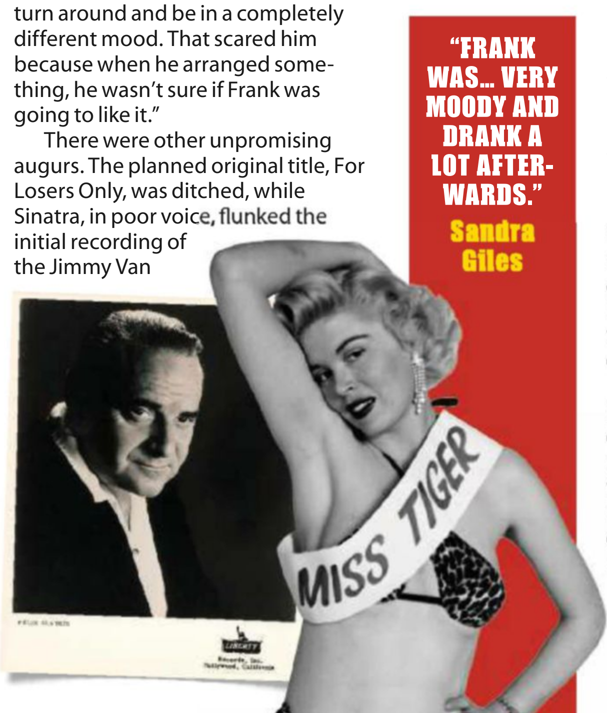
There were other unpromising augurs. The planned original title, For Losers Only, was ditched, while Sinatra, in poor voice, flunked the initial recording of the Jimmy Van Heusen-Sammy Cahn title track and had to return to Capitol Studios to deliver a satisfactory take.

> "FRANK WAS... VERY MOODY AND DRANK A LOT AFTERWARDS."
> **Sandra Giles**

It was during the first album session that Sinatra attempted a version of Billy Strayhorn's extraordinary Lush Life, but gave up after just a few bars. "I'll leave it to Nat Cole," Sinatra quipped (interested readers can hear it on YouTube). When the final sessions for the album took place, on June 25, his mood hadn't improved. His ABC network Frank Sinatra Show TV series, star-studded but unconvincing, was due to be dropped and replaced by game show E.S.P., hosted by Vincent Price – which in turn was so dismal that it would be ditched after just three weeks.

Even so, Sinatra seemed impressed by Riddle's settings and the huge array of quality musicians assembled for the recording dates. Al Viola, guitarist on the sessions, joked, "We had so many musicians that when I got to the first date, I thought it was a union meeting."

Riddle's absence on some of the



Stand-in and stood up: (insets below) Frank's Grammy date "Miss Tiger" Sandra Giles; Felix Slatkin stepped up to the rostrum.

sides was due to a prior engagement, accompanying Nat King Cole on a series of Canadian dates. But he was full of praise for his stand-in, Felix Slatkin, who was first violinist. Riddle explained: "I wrote all the arrangements but Felix, a fine violinist and fine conductor, did the session while I was up in Edmonton, Alberta or one of those places."

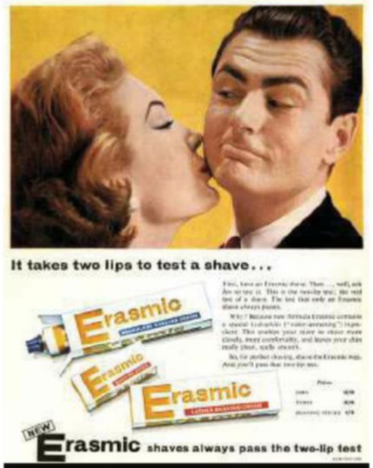
Riddle acknowledged the album as the best vocal recording with which he had ever been involved, while Sinatra himself hailed *Only The Lonely* as the greatest album he ever made. Housed in a sleeve that boasted a wonderfully-conceived portrait of Sinatra in the guise of Pagliacci, the sad clown, which was created by artist Nick Volpe, it seemed to be the perfect package. When the Grammys made their debut at Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles on May 4, 1959, Sinatra was nominated in several categories, including Best Album and Best Male Performance.

Yet, with the votes for the former split between *Only The Lonely* and *Come Fly With Me*, Hoboken's hero lost out to Henry Mancini's cool private eye soundtrack album *The Music Of Peter Gunn*. Eventually, the only Grammy Sinatra won was for Best Album Cover, which he accepted, though he admitted it should have gone to artist Volpe. His date for the evening, actress Sandra Giles, later told biographer Kitty Kelley: "Frank was so upset that he refused to let any of the photographers take our picture that night. He was very moody and drank a lot afterwards. I guess I should've been grateful that Elvis didn't win anything."

Lyricist Sammy Cahn, who, with composer Jimmy Van Heusen, provided the title song for both *Only The Lonely* and *Come Fly With Me*, found one grain of compensation amid the proceedings. After weighing up the considerable clout that Sinatra had with the reigning music establishment, he observed, "I guess that proves that this wasn't fixed!"

*Fred Dellar*

## AD ARCHIVE 1958


It takes two lips to test a shave...
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NEW
Erasmic shaves always pass the two-lip test

Two lips from New Amsterdam: like a baby's butt, who can resist the smooth, nick-free chops of a close shaved hunk.

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## ALSO THIS MONTH

### CRAZY ARM(ED)

**2** After disembarking from USS Randall at Bremerhaven, **Elvis Presley** (above), now in the army, is assigned to the Ray Barracks in Friedberg, buildings that once housed the Wehrmacht.

### GAME CHEER

**4** R&B singer-songwriter-pianist **Tommy Edwards** logs a Number 1 US hit with It's All In The Game, a song based on a 1912 melody by Charles Dawes, a songwriter who eventually became US Vice-President.

### BILLIE AILS

**4** **Billie Holiday** closes at the Blackhawk Club, San Francisco. She is suffering from cirrhosis. Her friend Dr Herbert Henderson will reflect that she should "have been in hospital instead of a night club. When I heard her sing it was pathetic."

### GOODBYE PAT

**11** Much respected musician **Patrick MacManus** dies in Birkenhead. His son, **Ross**, is vocalist with Joe Loss's dance band. His grandson Declan will find fame as **Elvis Costello**.

### BEAR TRUTH

**13** It's reported that **The Teddy Bears**' hit To Know Him Is To Love Him was penned by 18-year-old group member **Phil Spector** who is studying to be a court reporter.

### STEREO BOOM

**13** With stereo sound making an impact, Rock-Ola announce that they are to unveil a line of stereo phonographs, while Wurlitzer claim to have perfected a stereo jukebox that "is years ahead in ear appeal".

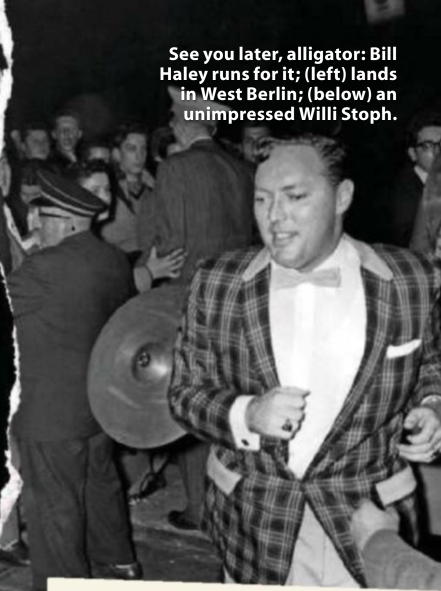
### BUDDY IN NY

**21** At New York's Pythian Temple, **Buddy Holly** records It's Doesn't Matter Any More, Moondreams, Raining In My Heart and True Love Ways. It will be his final session.

### CLIFF RIFFS

**26** **Cliff Richard** makes his radio debut on the BBC Light Programme's morning show Saturday Club.

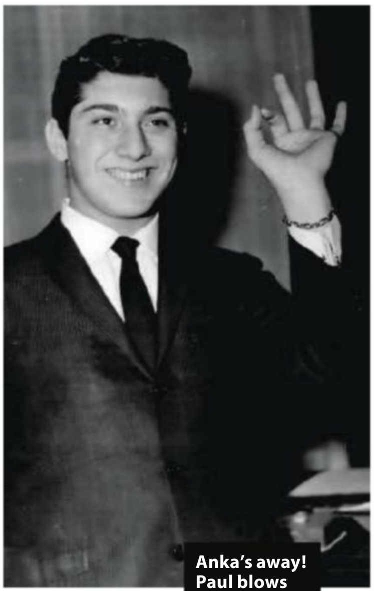
WELCOME TO BERLI



See you later, alligator: Bill Haley runs for it; (left) lands in West Berlin; (below) an unimpressed Willi Stoph.

# ...BILL HALEY PROMOTES NUCLEAR WAR?

**OCTOBER 26** As part of a European tour, Bill Haley plays the first rock'n'roll concert in Germany at West Berlin's Sportpalast. The show attracts around 7,000 people and causes riots. East German Defence Minister Willi Stoph declares that rock'n'roll is, a "means of seduction to make the youth ripe for atomic war" via fanatical, hysterical enthusiasm, and the communist Free German Youth claims the West German authorities are using concerts to prepare young people for conscription.



Anka's away! Paul blows into Honshu.

# ANKA STORMS JAPAN

**OCTOBER 27** The 17-year-old Canadian singer Paul Anka, just returned from a tour of Japan, claims: "We played Kyoto in the middle of a typhoon. We could look out the window of the hotel and see the Japanese being blown off their bicycles. Man, that was some wind. But they still packed the theatre in the middle of the storm."

## TOP TEN

## US R&B SINGLES OCTOBER 20

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **ROCKIN' ROBIN** | BOBBY DAY | CLASS |
| 2 | **TEARS ON MY PILLOW** | LITTLE ANTHONY & THE IMPERIALS | END |
| 3 | **IT'S ALL IN THE GAME** | TOMMY EDWARDS | MGM |
| 4 | **WIN YOUR LOVE FOR ME** | SAM COOKE | KEEN |
| 5 | **TOPSY II** | COZY COLE | LOVE |
| 6 | **DOWN THE AISLE OF LOVE** | THE QUIN-TONES | HUNT |
| 7 | **HOLD IT** | BILL DOGGETT | KING |
| 8 | **IT DON'T HURT NO MORE** | NAPPY BROWN | SAVOY |
| 9 | **TEN COMMANDMENTS OF LOVE** | HARVEY & THE MOONGLOWS | CHESS |
| 10 | **I'M GONNA GET MY BABY** | JIMMY REED | VEE-JAY |

Rockin' Bobby: Mr Day goes "tweet twiddly-tweet" at 1.

# RADIO WAVE SURFER

**1938-2017** Holger Czukay, bassist/tape editor with Can, sampling pioneer and musical trickster left us on September 5. By Ian Harrison.

Film, and its synthesis of action, soundtrack and storytelling, was close to Holger Czukay's heart. An important early memory, he said, was seeing Träumerei, the 1944 screen dramatisation of the marriage of Robert and Clara Schumann. From late 1971, he worked at Inner Space, a studio based in a former cinema in Weilerswist outside Cologne, initially with experimental thaumaturges Can and then as a solo artist. After leaving Can, his first release was called *Movies*.

A film of his life would have been an intriguing one, too. Born on March 24 in the Free City of Danzig in what had been East Prussia, the young Czukay and his family were refugees of war who moved west to the American-occupied zone of Germany, initially to Limburg An Der Lahn. As a youth he aspired to be an orchestral conductor, and later worked repairing televisions and radios. A convert to the power of pop music, he played guitar and formed his own jazz combo, The Holger Schüring Quintette. In later years he proudly remembered this group both winning prizes and being disqualified from music tournaments.

After a period learning double bass in Berlin, where he met Herbert von Karajan and John Cage, he became a pupil of Karlheinz Stockhausen, from 1963 to 1966, in Cologne. It was here that Stockhausen gave the young Czukay some life-changing advice. "He talked to me, like your father," Czukay told me. "He said, 'When I didn't know what I wanted to do, I had to *spring*, and you have to do the same. You have to take this risk and leap into the water.' I was crying, because he was talking out of my heart."

Initially this leap involved teaching music in Switzerland where, Czukay admitted, he was looking for a well-off wife. A life change of a different sort came when his young pupil, guitarist Michael Karoli, played him I Am The Walrus. Soon after, keyboardist Irmin Schmidt – whom Czukay had met on the Stockhausen course – contacted him with a plan for a new group that, in an attempt to create anew on the ruins of the old world, would meld rock, jazz, modern classical and what would later be called world music, while maintaining a spirit of free improvisation. Billed as 'technical laboratory chief & red armed bass' on the cover of Can's 1969 debut album *Monster Movie*, Czukay was soon honing a sparing, rhythmic style and pursuing an expansive kind of hypnotic minimalism with Schmidt, Karoli, master drummer Jaki Liebezeit and American vocalist Malcolm Mooney. One of the most thrilling adventures of the rock era had begun, with band members comparing their combined efforts to a sentient living thing independent of themselves.

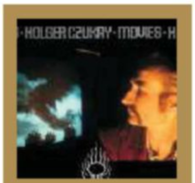
While Can was putting down roots at the Schloss Nörvenich castle near Cologne, Czukay was working with musician/artist Rolf Dammers on an album sparked by Stockhausen's use of tape manipulation and non-western musics. Recorded by night in Stockhausen's studio using recycled tape, 1969's *Canaxis 5* was a pioneering work of sampling, meshing sombre church choirs and Vietnamese singers culled from Czukay's trawls of the global radio ether into a ritualistic whole. Czukay's skill as a tape editor would also be vital to giving Can's free extemporisations their final form on classic albums including *Tago Mago* (1971) and *Ege Bamyasi* (1972). As Schmidt told me in 2011, "Editing, building long pieces, and structuring – to work on that with Holger was pure joy, because he is so caring. The passion, the impulse… to not give in before it's perfect."

Czukay's urge to use the potentials of radio in its receiving and broadcasting forms would also lead to schism. Though Can scored a UK Top Of The Pops appearance with their summer 1976 hit I Want More, he would soon vacate his bassist role in favour of a 'Sound Table' which enabled him to add tapes, radio broadcasts and even live telephone calls to performances. It was prescient, but not to his bandmates' tastes. After a fist fight with percussionist Reebop Kwaku Baah in London, Czukay left Can in May 1977.

The solo career that followed picked up where *Canaxis* left off, using material culled from the radio given form by painstaking, skilled splicing of tape. 1979's *Movies* was arguably his masterpiece, though all his albums are worthy of attention, as he embraced the random, maintained a dilettante mindset and employed instruments irrespective of his facility on them (one of his favourites was the French horn). Additionally, lessons of space and rhythm learned from Can – assisted by the presence of Liebezeit on nearly all of his sessions – helped Czukay's surreal, disruptive sense of humour to manifest. A Maoist song of China's Cultural Revolution was groovily mangled on 1984's *Der Osten Ist Rot*, while 1987's *Rome Remains Rome* found Pope John Paul II singing with a blues band. One piece of satire that went unrealised, says regular collaborator Jah Wobble, was a proposed video for 1979's danceable oddity Cool In The Pool, which would star infamous figures from the Third Reich. "Sometimes Holger's humour was very hard to get by," says Can engineer René Tinner. "It was not always humorous for anyone else other than Holger. But that was part of his personality. Holger's opinion of music was, if someone knew, it was only him. But we had a lot to laugh, always."

Czukay also worked with Conny Plank, Cluster, David Sylvian, Eurythmics, The Edge, and, for 1989's reunion album *Rite Time*, his old bandmates in Can. He recorded into the noughties, and in recent years moved back to Can's old Inner Space studio in Weilerswist, where he lived with his wife and collaborator Ursula, AKA Ursa Major/U-She. I interviewed him there in May 2016, and though he seemed all of his 78 years, he remained good humoured and speculated on the possibility of new creation. "The music would sound different, I know," he said.

He was found dead on September 5. U-She, who had been in poor health, passed away in July.



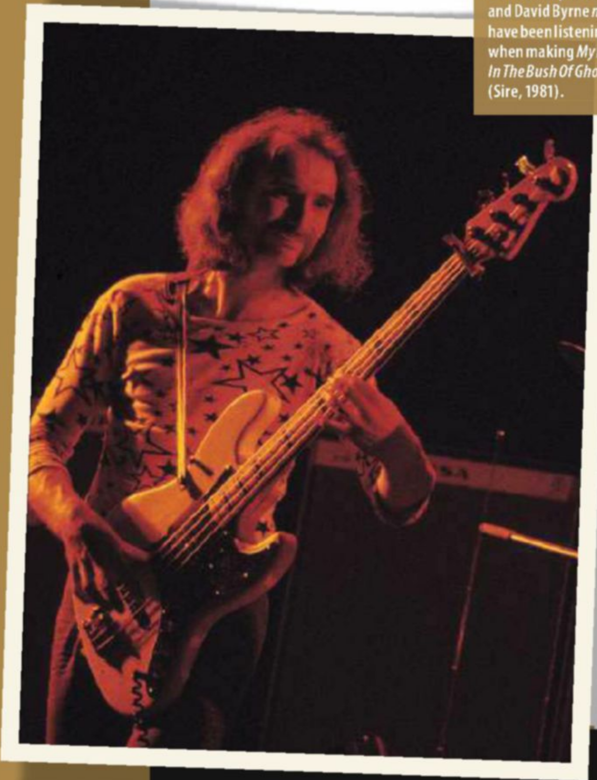
### THE LEGACY

**Album:** *Movies* (EMI, 1979)

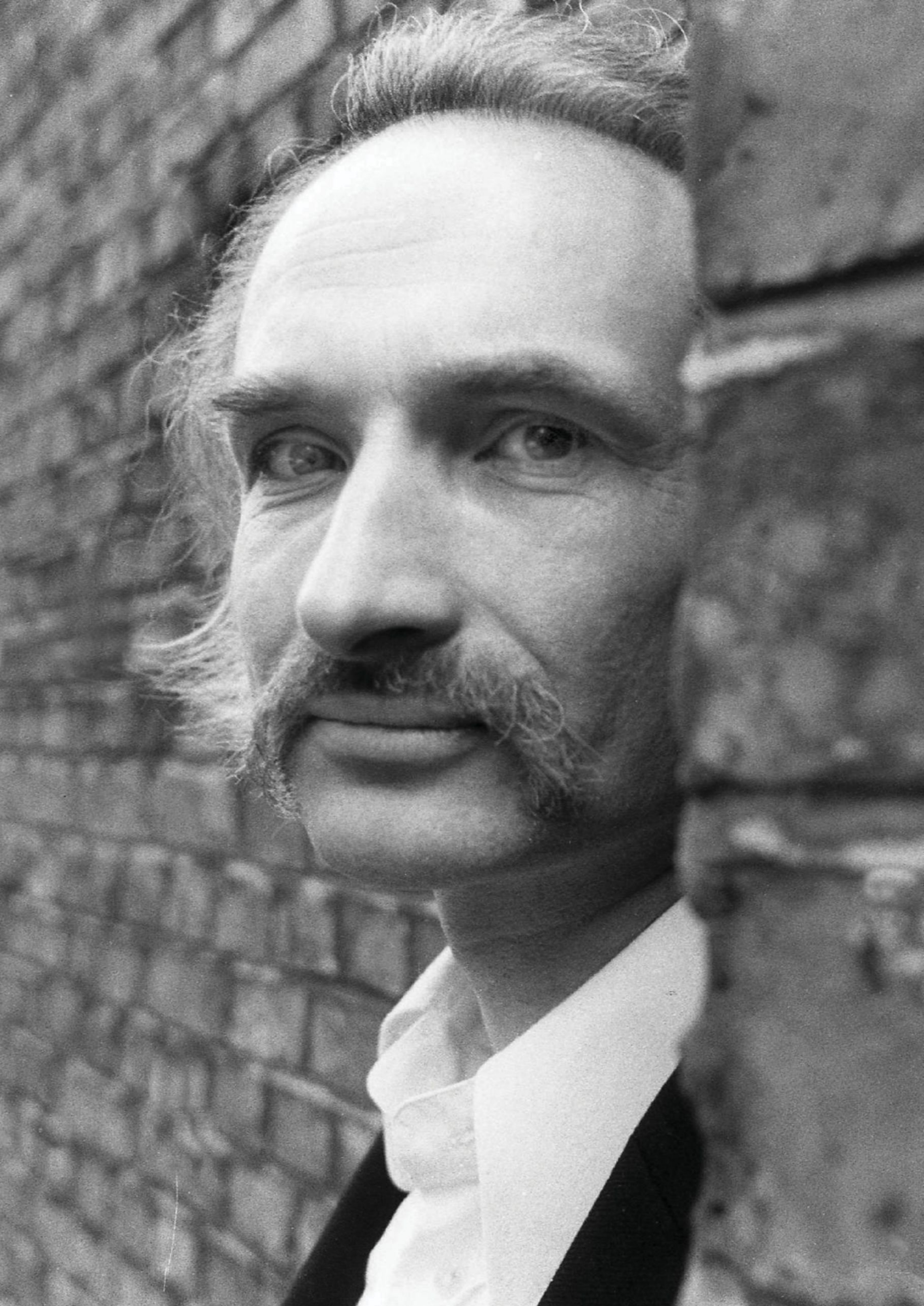
**The Sound:** Tape composition meets live playing in a groundbreaking work of sampling. Dadaesque humours abound, but as on the Afrobeat/reggae/electronic Persian Love, created using singers from Radio Tehran, so does an appreciation of beauty. The rest of Can play on Oh Lord Give Us More Money. Brian Eno and David Byrne *must* have been listening when making *My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts* (Sire, 1981).

> "WE HAD A LOT TO LAUGH, ALWAYS."
> René Tinner, Can engineer

**The tape man: Holger Czukay visits London in 1982, at the time of his Jah Wobble/Jaki Liebezeit collaboration *Full Circle*; (below) live with Can, 1974.**



Tom Sheehan, Camera Press



# A MAJOR DUDE

**1950-2017** Walter Becker, soulful cynic, acerbic wit and one half of Steely Dan, left us on September 3. By **Mat Snow.**

With the passing on September 3 of Walter Becker, one of the greatest of all creative partnerships in modern music has come to an end.

Walter Becker and Donald Fagen of Steely Dan are giants of the classic rock album era who always stood off in the wings, to the fringe not only of the scene but the music too. Neither rockers nor showmen but intellectuals born too late to be beatniks, they belonged to the college-educated demi-monde of bitter-black espresso humour, modern jazz connoisseurship and the hip end of American creative writing.

Yet for all their smuggling of jazz chords, rhythms, and licks into pop song-making, were there ever more singable tunes? Or groovier grooves to grab you hip and thigh and escort you from the library to the dancefloor? Steely Dan were the ultimate revenge of the nerds: they upended the hierarchy to raise geekiness to the empyrean of cool.

That partnership was formed 50 years ago in New York's Bard College. They bonded over jazz and blues (Randy Wolfe, later California of the band Spirit, was Walter's early guitar mentor) and shared a "rebel spirit", as Fagen recalled to me in MOJO, "a beat consciousness that we grew up with. Walter and I were both big fans of [Frank] Zappa and used to see him at the Garrick Theatre in the Village" (where The Mothers Of Invention had a six-month residency in 1967). Their path to Steely Dan came via providing studio musicianship for Jay And The Americans, and as an offbeat songwriting partnership introduced to their future record company, ABC/Dunhill, by Gary Katz, who, as producer of every Dan album from their first to the seventh and last of their 1972-80 hot streak, has a close understanding of their creative chemistry.

"It was a repartee thing all the time," Katz recalls, just days after Becker's death. "They were clearly two different people but they had a bond, though that wasn't obvious when we first met. I never saw them write a note. Every song had to be written before they came into the studio. We never did demos or rehearsed."

As for the songwriting division of labour, "Donald once said, 'Walter can't start a song and I can't finish it,'" Katz recalls. "When we were doing *Aja* [1977] we all lived in Malibu but Donald didn't drive. Everything was finished except Deacon Blues, but Walter didn't come over to help Donald finish it. He'd tell me, 'Would you please call him to come over and help me finish this song?' So I call Walter and say, Look, Fagen's going nuts – you gotta go over there and help him with this song. He said, 'OK' …but he didn't. A couple more days go by so I call him again. And that night Walter went over. Fagen called me afterwards: 'He came over here, listened to what I had – and wrote the last verse in five minutes. I just wanted to kill him!'"

Following the news of his partner's death, Fagen recalled, "Walter had a very rough childhood – I'll spare you the details. Luckily, he was smart as a whip, an excellent guitarist and a great songwriter. He was cynical about human nature, including his own, and hysterically funny. Like a lot of kids from fractured families, he had the knack of creative mimicry, reading people's hidden psychology and transforming what he saw into bubbly, incisive art."

Nor were those close to him spared Walter's intellect and acid humour. "Walter is the smartest person I've ever known, and Donald the second," says Katz. "The combination was challenging. If you were having a disagreement with anybody, you didn't want to have it with Walter. He was bitingly smart – bitingly. He was so well-read, not somebody to fuck with.

"When they went on the road, I would go sometimes, and at the end of a show Donald, Walter and I would get a bite to eat, go back to the hotel room, smoke a joint and play Scrabble all night long. Of the thousand games we played, it was always the same. Walter won every game and Donald came second. Walter would put a ridiculous word down, one of us would challenge him so you'd look it up and sure enough it would be a Nigerian yellow-bellied sap-sucker."

Whatever deep-rooted demons gnawed at Walter, they came to the fore after *Aja* when, with his self-medication in overdrive and later beset by both his girlfriend Karen Stanley's death by overdose in his apartment and being hit by a cab in a street accident, the torturous labour pains on their next album *Gaucho* (1980) broke up the duo.

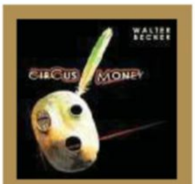
Whereas Fagen bounced straight back with *The Nightfly*, Becker recovered his health in Hawaii, started a family and produced albums for artists including China Crisis, Fra Lippo Lippi (whose Virgin A&R man Ronnie Gurr recalls him as a "hard taskmaster"), Rosie Vela and Rickie Lee Jones (who remembers him as a "softy. A recovering addict. Hey, me too"). He also produced Fagen's second solo album *Kamakiriad* (1993). In 1994 Donald returned the favour producing Walter's first, *11 Tracks Of Whack*, which was succeeded another 14 years later by *Circus Money* (see sidebar).

Minus Gary Katz, Steely Dan sporadically reformed in the studio, with *Two Against Nature* (2000) and *Everything Must Go* (2003) narrowing their earlier range to hyper-machined *Weltschmerz*, and on-stage, where, unlike the early '70s, they almost seemed to enjoy the victory lap.

And now Walter Becker is gone. Rock's collective erudition has suffered a massive drop but those hip, biting grooves will live forever.

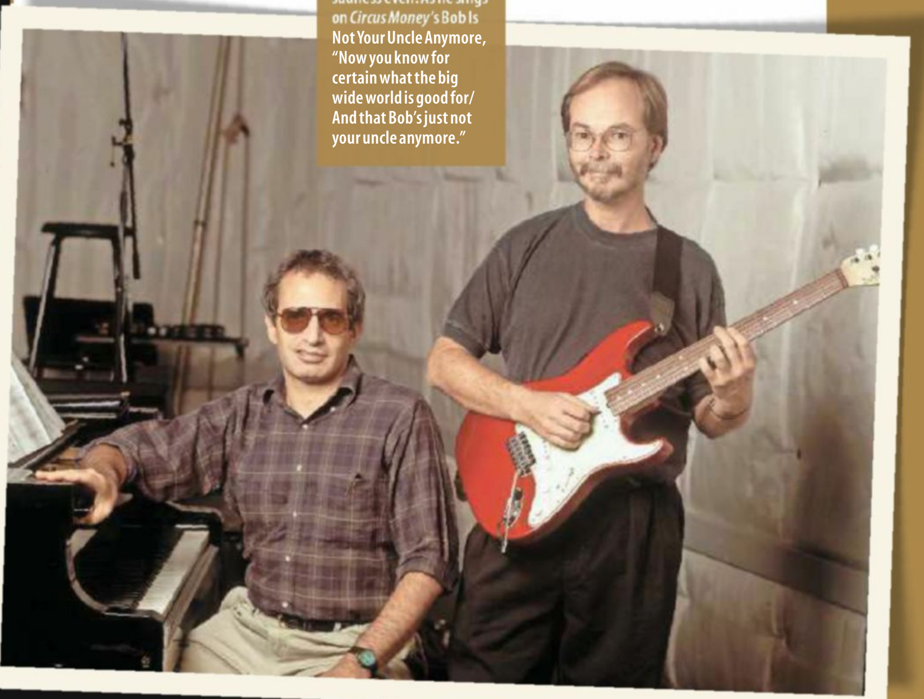
**Upside looking down: Walter Becker "was smart as a whip," said Steely foil Donald Fagen, together in 1993 (below); (right) Becker in July 1977, before the release of *Aja*, yet another Dan classic.**

"WALTER WON EVERY GAME OF SCRABBLE…"
Gary Katz

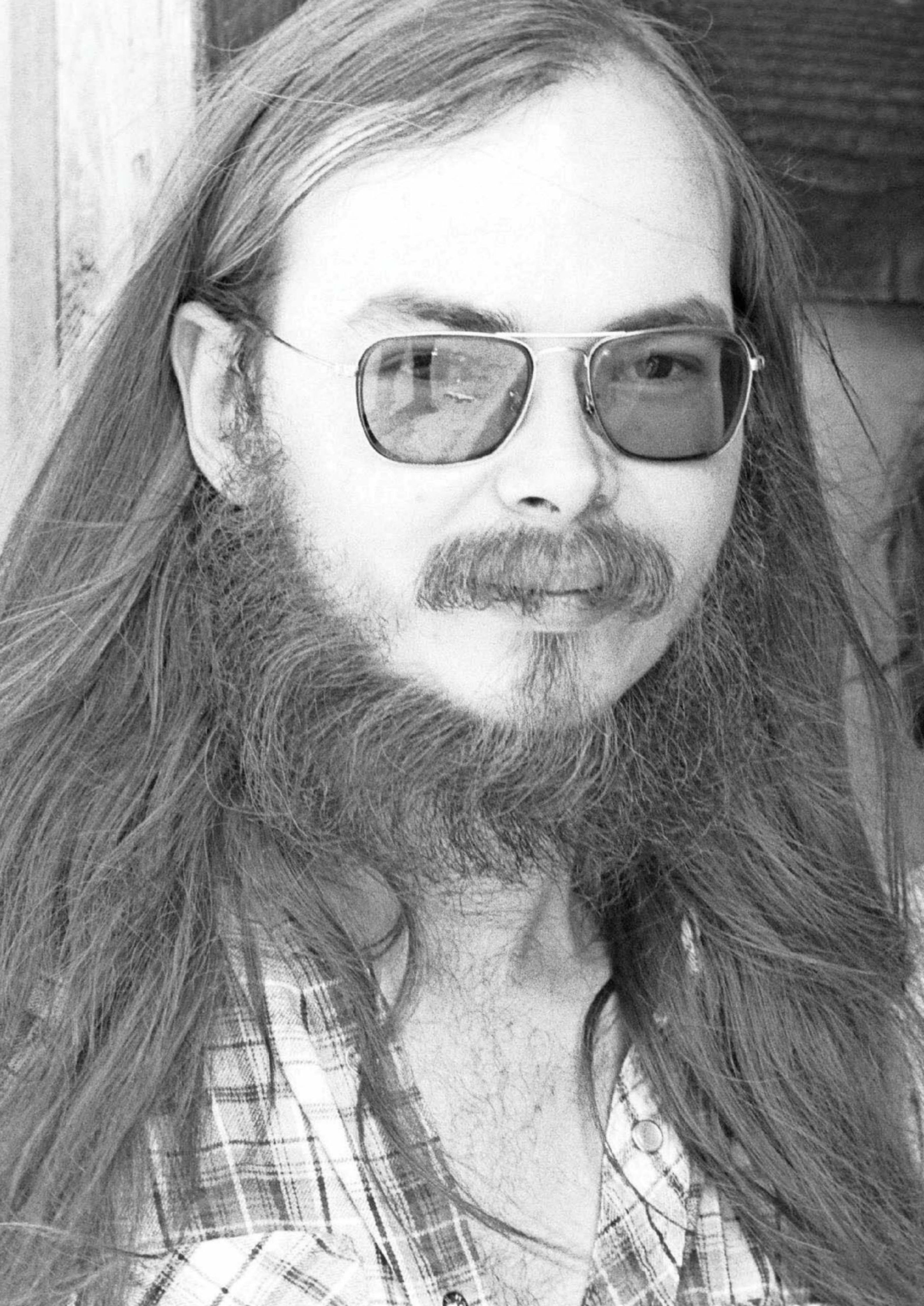


### THE LEGACY

**Album:** *Walter Becker Circus Money* (5 Over 12/ Mailboat, 2008)
**The Sound:** Where solo Donald rejoiced in luxe nostalgia, Walter's two compelling solo albums wallow in a weary melancholy, outright sadness even. As he sings on *Circus Money*'s Bob Is Not Your Uncle Anymore, "Now you know for certain what the big wide world is good for/ And that Bob's just not your uncle anymore."



Henry Diltz, Getty Images



### THE LEGACY

**Album:** *Ghost On The Canvas* (Surfdog, 2011)
**The Sound:** Greatest Hits anthologies best reflect Campbell's pop legacy and are a must. But with Julian Raymond as his Rick Rubin, and Replacements songwriter Paul Westerberg acting as his Jimmy Webb, his 61st studio album is as poignant as (would be) farewells get.

1936-2017

# BY RIVERS FLOWING GENTLE

Glen Campbell, pop-country giant and peerless interpreter of Jimmy Webb, left us on August 8.

Even without pop superstardom – he outsold The Beatles in 1968 – Glen Campbell's musical legacy would still be impressive. One of the greatest guitarists of his generation and a member of Los Angeles studio team The Wrecking Crew, Campbell played on hundreds of classic recordings by artists ranging from Dean Martin, Nat King Cole and Elvis Presley to The Byrds, The Monkees and many of Phil Spector's greatest hits. That's him on *Pet Sounds*, too.

Not bad for the high school drop-out son of a dirt-poor sharecropper from Billstown, Arkansas. And to think it began as a fluke, when Frank Sinatra producer/arranger Don Costa asked the self-described rhythm player to take a solo. "I can't read music," said the self-taught Campbell, who'd learned on a $5 Sears guitar his father gave him. "You know the melody, don't you?" replied Costa.

There were previous attempts to make him a solo star; Brian Wilson, who he replaced as a touring Beach Boy in 1964 and '65, gave him the cult classic Guess I'm Dumb. And there are videos of him from US TV, revealing a guitar-behind-the-neck, Hendrix-like showmanship. But nothing clicked as it did when he teamed with composer and career-long collaborator Jimmy Webb in 1967. Their partnership resulted in such definitive Webb interpretations as Galveston and By The Time I Get To Phoenix. 1968 smash Wichita Lineman, their masterpiece, still stands as one of the greatest, most evocative pop singles ever recorded.

He hosted his own hit US TV show, The Glen Campbell Goodtime Hour, from '69 to '72. In 1970, he performed for both President Richard Nixon and Queen Elizabeth, and became one of Las Vegas's main headliners.

The hits – 45 million records' worth – continued through the late '70s, with two of his biggest being 1975's Rhinestone Cowboy and 1977's Southern Nights. He was often hailed as the first pop-country crossover superstar, though scandal and decline followed in the '80s, including alcoholism, cocaine addiction and a tumultuous relationship with country singer Tanya Tucker. He credited fourth wife Kim with getting his life back on track.

**Singing in the wire: Glen Campbell, in the late '60s.**

"WICHITA LINEMAN... ONE OF THE GREATEST POP SINGLES EVER RECORDED."

Tragically, in the middle of a 2011 comeback, he was diagnosed with the Alzheimer's that claimed his life. He followed the release of a new album, *Ghost On The Canvas*, by bravely embarking on his Goodbye Tour, with three of his children leading his band. The five-week schedule evolved into 150 shows and a year-and-a-half trek, which found him headlining venues as massive as the Hollywood Bowl and as small as a dinner theatre in Detroit.

This writer caught the latter. While there were moments of confusion, the singing and musicianship remained amazing. And when he got to Wichita Lineman, thanks to decades of memories, both wonderful and bittersweet, there was hardly a dry eye in the house.

He released his final album, *Adiós*, in June.

*Bill Holdship*

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# REAL GONE

**Red headed barnstormer: Sonny Burgess in his prime.**

## GOLDY McJOHN

### STEPPENWOLF ORGANIST

### BORN 1945

A classically trained pianist, the man born John Goadsby was by 1964 a member of Toronto group The Mynah Birds, whose shifting line-up at times featured Rick James, Bruce Palmer and Neil Young. In 1965 he joined The Sparrows, who would become Steppenwolf in 1967. Within two years the afro'd McJohn's keyboard parts would be heard on chart entries including Magic Carpet Ride and Born To Be Wild, the 1968 Number 2 that featured in the 1969 film Easy Rider and which is credited with the first use of the phrase "heavy metal" in a hit song. As Steppenwolf activity became more sporadic towards the middle '70s, McJohn played in Manbeast; he was finally fired from Steppenwolf in 1975. Thereafter he would vie with Steppenwolf vocalist John Kay for use of the band's name, played briefly with Steve Marriott in a reconstituted Humble Pie, and recorded solo works including *Rat City In Blue* and *Set The World On Fire*.

*Clive Prior*

## SONNY BURGESS

### THE ARKANSAS WILD MAN

### BORN 1929

Sonny Burgess, who has died aged 88, saw Elvis multiple times in 1955, and even jammed with him on-stage. "I thought Elvis was the best I've ever heard in my life," Sonny told me, "and I've heard a lot of good ones." Born near Newport, Arkansas, Burgess developed a powerful rocking voice and stinging lead guitar style. At their debut Sun session, he and his band The Pacers cut one of the great primal rockabilly 45s, We Wanna Boogie/Red Headed Woman – the first about Sonny's hometown, the second about his wife. With his dyed red hair, red guitar and red jacket, he barnstormed through the South alongside Sun artists like Roy Orbison and Johnny Cash. In the '70s Sonny worked as a salesman, then resumed touring because of overseas interest in his Sun material, continuing right up until this year.

*Max Décharné*

## THEY ALSO SERVED

AUSTRALIAN singer and songwriter **GEOFF MACK** (b.1922) entertained the troops during the Second World War while serving in the RAAF. But he found pop fame with his 1959 song I've Been Everywhere, which detailed a truck driver's travels across Australia. Popularised by **Lucky Starr**, it was re-cut US-style by **Hank Snow** in 1962, replacing towns like Wollongong and Girraween with Louisville and Nebraska. Covers by **Willie Nelson** and **Johnny Cash** followed, as did German, Indian, Czech and Finnish versions.

DOO WOP voice **WILLIAM 'DICEY' GALLOWAY** (b.c.1933) was in much-admired NY vocal group **The Harptones**, who found success with Sunday Kind Of Love in 1953. Their 1955 recording Life Is But A Dream was heard in the 1990 film Goodfellas. Galloway was inducted into the vocal group Hall of Fame in 2002, where The Harptones sang again at Boston's Symphony Hall.

BRONX BIG BAND-era voice **BEA WAIN** (b.1917) worked with the orchestras of **Artie Shaw** and **Larry Clinton**, with whom she sang the published hit version of **Hoagy Carmichael** and **Frank Loesser's** Heart And Soul in 1938. She also found success with Deep Purple, My Reverie and Cry, Baby Cry, and was one of the first singers to record Over The Rainbow, though her version was not put on sale until after The Wizard Of Oz was released in August 1939. After the war she was a radio presenter with her husband **Andre Baruch**, and retired in 1980.

Guitarist **JOHN ABERCROMBIE** (b.1944) had a long and productive creative life that took in jazz fusion, jazz rock and free jazz, as well as more traditional explorations of the form and his own "chamber jazz" recordings. A collaborative player of rare subtlety and understanding, from 1969 he played in groups including **Dreams** and **Gateway**, working with musicians including **Gil Evans**, **Gato Barbieri**, **John Scofield**, **Paul Bley**, **Jan Hammer**, **Kenny Wheeler**, **Jack DeJohnette**, **Chico Hamilton**, **Michael** and **Randy Brecker** and **Billy Cobham**. In 1974 he began a 43-year association with ECM records: his last album, *Up And Coming*, was released in January.

**Bea Wain: she always sang with heart and soul.**

CANADIAN vocalist **KENNY SHIELDS** (b.c.1948) sang with **Witness Incorporated** before joining **Streetheart** in 1977. They found domestic success with covers of **Them**'s Here Comes The Night, the **Stones**' Under My Thumb and **Small Faces**' Tin Soldier, as well as multiple platinum albums. After the group split in 1983, Shields formed his own group, but reunited with Streetheart bandmates in 1999. They had been on a 40th anniversary farewell tour at the time of his death from heart failure.

GUITAR/MANDOLIN player **BERND WITTHÜSER** (b.1944) was, with multi-instrumentalist **Walter Westrupp**, a member of Witthüser & Westrupp, whose 1971 LP *Trips & Träume* remains admired by Krautrock fans. He later returned to busking, as a one-man band and in a duo with violinist **Otto Richter**, making his own instruments, adopting the name Bernelli and living in Italy. He released a final solo album *Kasablanka* in 2010.

SONGWRITER and producer **BILLY JOE WALKER JR** (b.1952) cut his teeth as a young session guitarist in Los Angeles, where he worked with **Glen Campbell**, **The Beach Boys** and **Merle Haggard**, and played on film and TV soundtracks. After moving to Nashville on the advice of producer **Jimmy Bowen**, he worked as a sideman for **Ray Charles**, the **Dixie Chicks** and **Hank Williams Jr**, and produced LPs for **Travis Tritt**, **Billy Ray Cyrus** and **Bryan White**, and others. Writing credits include songs for **Trisha Yearwood**, **Tanya Tucker**, and **Eddie Rabbitt**, who had a country Number 1 with the 1988 co-write I Wanna Dance With You.

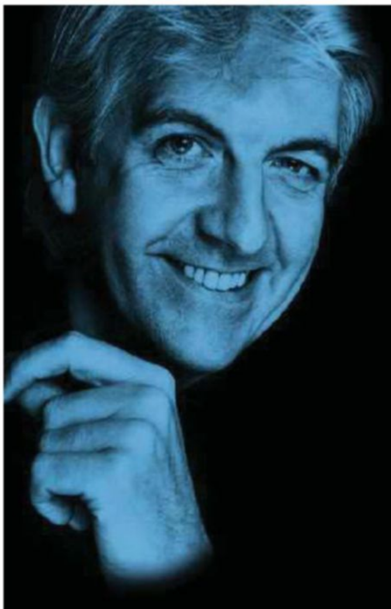
**KITTY LUX** (b.1957) was a founder member of **The Ukulele Orchestra Of Great Britain** in 1985. The group toured internationally, reinterpreted the music of **Jimmy Webb**, **Hawkwind**, **Lou Reed** and others, and recorded original material, on LPs including *Anarchy In The Ukulele* and *A Fist Full Of Ukuleles*. They also worked with **Madness**, **Cat Stevens** and **David Arnold**, and played a private engagement for the Queen's 90th birthday. Lux retired in 2015.

JAMAICAN singer **WAYNE McGHIE** (b.Wilfred McGhie, 1946) was born in Montego Bay, emigrating to Toronto in the late '60s. There he worked with **Jo-Jo Bennett** and **Jackie Mittoo**, and recorded the 1970 reggae-soul album *Wayne McGhie & The Sounds Of Joy*. But most copies were destroyed in a warehouse fire, whereafter McGhie recorded sporadically, suffered ill-health and ended up homeless. In the mid-'90s however, rare record treasure hunters discovered his LP, and it was finally acclaimed upon reissue in 2004.

SOUL II SOUL voice **MELISSA BELL** (b.1964) was part of Jazzie B's group from 1993 to '95. In this time she sang lead on the Number 24 hit Wish, and appeared on the album *Volume V Believe*. She later recorded solo and formed the group **Soul Explosion**. Her daughter is X-Factor winner **Alexandra Burke**.

*Clive Prior*

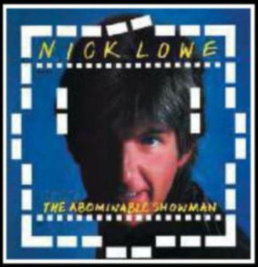
Getty Images (3)



# NICK **LOWE**

NICK LOWE
nick the knife

Nick the Knife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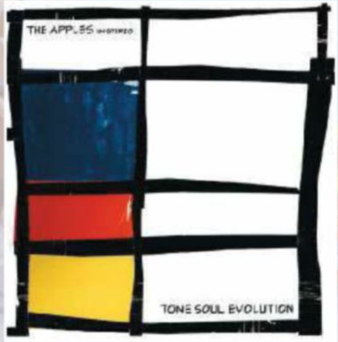
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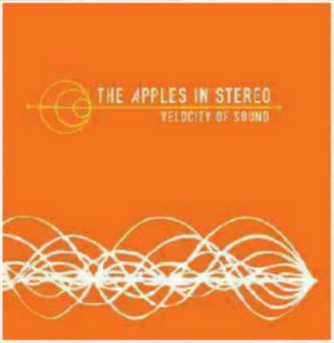
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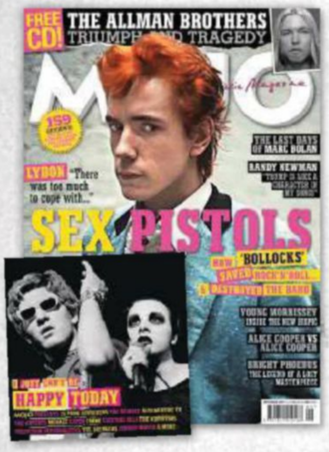
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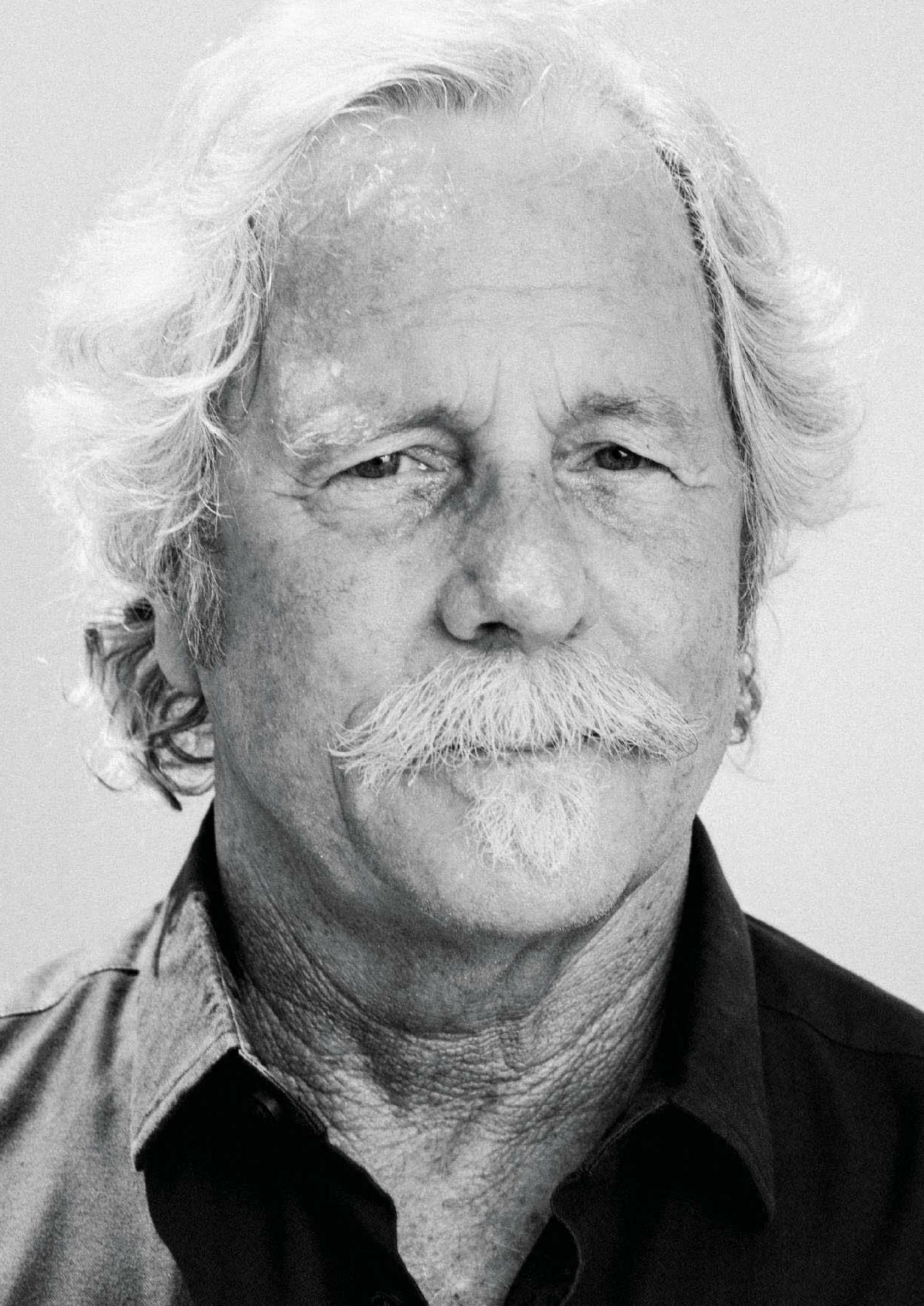

**THE MOJO INTERVIEW**

# Running from **childhood tragedy**, he traded **bluegrass** for **Byrdsmania**, then **Burrito burnout**. Yet somehow, through it all, he's managed to **keep his head**. "I was a little **bit of a Zelig**," shrugs **Chris Hillman**.

Interview by **BOB MEHR** • Portrait by **RACHAEL WRIGHT**

"THAT'S ME," SAYS CHRIS HILLMAN, pointing at a framed sepia-toned family photograph from the late 1940s. "Third from the left, the little baby. Scowling, as always."

As he says this, Hillman is smiling brightly, showing MOJO around his Spanish-style home, nestled above the beach town of Ventura, some 60 miles north of Los Angeles. Hillman and his wife Connie have lived in this region for the past 30 years. At the age of 72, he is testament to the benefits of a relaxed coastal California lifestyle: deeply tanned, with a head of luminous silver hair, the very picture of health and contentment.

Hillman's downstairs office is packed with mementos from a life in music. The walls are lined with photos: a snapshot with Bob Dylan, a portrait with bluegrass pioneer Bill Monroe. One plaque stands out in the crowd, a gift from Columbia Records that reads: "In appreciation of the timeless achievement of The Byrds whose music changed the way the world rocked." Next to that is a poster from an early Byrds tour, a Dick Clark Caravan Of Stars package.

"When we started out we still had a foot in that old 1950s rock'n'roll world," says Hillman. That world would change rapidly and Hillman was there to help shape it: from the birth of folk rock, to the evolution of psychedelia and the creation of country rock. He was on-stage during the Summer of Love, playing Monterey Pop with The Byrds, and saw the death of that era at Altamont with The Flying Burrito Brothers.

"I'm not someone who over-romanticises the 1960s," he admits, "but I was a little bit of a Zelig, there at a lot of those big moments."

He's worked as collaborator and foil to such talented, mercurial artists as Gene Clark, David Crosby, Gram Parsons and Stephen Stills, and in the '80s led his own hit-making country outfit the Desert Rose Band, before a late career return to the folk and bluegrass that first fired his imagination.

Over the last few years, he's been putting his recollections down in a memoir he thought he'd completed, but now there's a new chapter to add.

"As of last fall, I figured my career was over," he says. But a surprise offer from longtime admirer Tom Petty – midwifed by his musical collaborator and friend Herb Pedersen – brought Hillman back to the studio. Produced by Petty and Pedersen, the resulting album, *Bidin' My Time*, reunites Hillman with Byrds mates Crosby and Roger McGuinn, plus various Heartbreakers. Yet, despite the guest list, it's mostly a spare, stripped-down affair, a perfect distillation of Hillman's sharp craft and quiet brilliance. ➤

## WE'RE NOT WORTHY

### The comforts of Chris Hillman. By **Steve Earle**.

"When I first met Chris [in the '80s], it was one of the biggest things in my life. 'Cos growing up in Texas, I was the weird guy with long hair *and* cowboy boots – the very existence of country rock was comforting to me. Chris was at the centre of that. So I *always* paid attention to Chris Hillman."

Historically, Hillman's been a hard man to read – the moody, inscrutable figure hanging back in old promo photos. But behind the sombre mien lurked family tragedy, and a determination to overcome it. Now, more than ever, Hillman seems willing to reflect on his journey. "All right," he says, rolling up his sleeves, a workman at heart. "Let's talk."

**You were a Southern California kid, but it sounds like it was a fairly rural existence.**

We had a one-acre, one-storey ranch house in Rancho Santa Fe, in San Diego County. My older brother was in [US youth organisation] 4H and he raised chickens and hogs. I literally rode my horse to elementary school. It was a wonderful way to grow up. My dad was sorta like Eddie Albert [in US '60s sitcom Green Acres], the gentleman who'd come to the country.

**What music did you grow up with?**

My parents had pretty hip tastes: Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald. I'll never forget my dad, laying on the bed in my brother's room listening to [Billy Ward And The Dominoes'] Sixty Minute Man. (*Sings*) "I'll rock 'em, roll 'em, all night long…" He loved Slim Gaillard's Cement Mixer, too. The old man had a good ear for that stuff. I was right there when Elvis Presley and Little Richard came out. I had no inclination to learn or play the guitar then. I just loved the music.

**Then you got hooked on bluegrass, and the mandolin specifically…**

The first mandolin I saw was Mike Seeger playing a Gibson F-5 in The New Lost City Ramblers. As I got more knowledgeable about bluegrass I'd see Bill Monroe playing. It was something about the instrument that hit a nerve. I loved the speed of the playing, the improvisational quality – it was like hillbilly jazz. And I loved the harmonies, two- or three-part harmonies. I went from folk music to bluegrass to learning the guitar then mandolin. My parents couldn't stand that music. I'd be listening to The Stanley Brothers and my dad would say to my mom, "God almighty Betty, are you sure this is our son? Was he left on our doorstep by a family from Oklahoma?" (*laughs*). He wasn't being mean, he thought it was an odd fascination. And the poor guy didn't live long enough to see the fruits of my labours.

**Your father committed suicide when you were 16…**

It was awful. Absolutely awful. I'll be honest with you – I was very bitter for years. My older brother and sister were already out of the house; my little sister and I dealt with the aftermath. I was angry that he died and killed himself and left us alone. The man left us destitute – OK? We had to move to Los Angeles – which was like culture shock for me. I worked at a department store in the daytime to earn money, and went to night school to get credits for a high school diploma. My mother was an incredible woman, very strong, and we made it through. My father was a good guy – he was. He had mental problems. And I have no problem talking about it. But yeah… suicide is a terrible thing. When I look back on myself, I was innocent, and not real bright. But I managed to survive. That incident – the traumatic part of that death, of my dad – it left me taking each day as it came, and not thinking too far ahead.

**How much was music a part of that survival?**

Music was the saving grace. When I turned 18 I left home. I'd joined the [Scottsville] Squirrel Barkers, then made my way to The Golden State Boys. Otherwise, I would've been in the service and probably dead now from Vietnam. Starting in '64, they were taking anything that walked. I got drafted two years in a row, '64 and '65. I got drafted in The Byrds – Gene Clark and I got drafted. My brother was already in the service, and I was helping support my mom, so I got out of it on a legitimate basis. But my God – without music, it could've gone another way.

**Then fate intervened with a call from the producer/manager, Jim Dickson, who was working with David Crosby, Roger McGuinn and Gene Clark on a Beatles-styled pop band…**

I don't know why Jim called me. I'd done some stuff with him prior to The Byrds. But he might've called 12 guys before me. He said, "Come listen to these guys and tell me what you think." When I heard David, Gene and Roger singing with Roger's acoustic 12-string, there was a magic about it. They were doing stuff that Gene was writing which was very Beatlesque, almost funny. At the time, I was working for Randy Sparks, the New Christy Minstrels guy, in this horrid Green Grass Group, just to make money to eat. But when I heard them, I knew this was the right thing for me. This door had opened and I went, Oh yeah, I'll go in there and bluff my way through it – which I did.

**How do you view Dickson's role in shaping The Byrds now?**

He was a controlling guy. It wasn't always pleasant. But he had a vision, and it was a good one. He looked at it like, "We've got the outgoing one, Crosby. We've got the aloof intellectual, Roger. We've got the handsome brawny one, Gene Clark, the cute one, Mike Clarke, so we'll get the shy guy, Chris Hillman." He saw all that. He was the controller, but also an anchor, like Brian Epstein was for The Beatles. Oddly enough, once we got rid of him things started to crumble. Roger's famous line about The Byrds being a band of cutthroat pirates – I love that. He's right. There wasn't any

## A LIFE IN PICTURES

### Byrd watching: Hillman's highlights.

**1** Hillman, aged 4 on Peanutbrittle: "I literally rode my horse to school."

**2** Playing mandolin, second from left, in the Scottsville Squirrel Barkers: "My parents couldn't stand that music."

**3** With J.D. Souther (centre), and Richie Furay (right) AKA Souther-Furay-Hillman: "In the '70s every group I was in sounded like a law firm.'

**4** The Byrds flock together, 1965: (clockwise from top left) Roger McGuinn, Gene Clark, Hillman, Michael Clarke, David Crosby.

**5** The Flying Burrito Brothers, 1969: (clockwise from top left) Chris Ethridge, Gram Parsons, 'Sneaky' Pete Kleinow, Hillman. "Gram was the funniest man in the world."

**6** McGuinn, Clark and Hillman in 1977: "I dunno why we didn't call it The Byrds."

**7** The Desert Rose Band (from left: John Jorgenson, Herb Pedersen, Hillman): "Me finally coming into my own."

**8** Country cousins: with Brad Paisley at the 41st Academy of Country Music Awards, 2006.

**9** At the Magic Mountain Music Festival, Mount Tamalpais, near San Francisco: "I was a shy guy. I didn't have the confidence."

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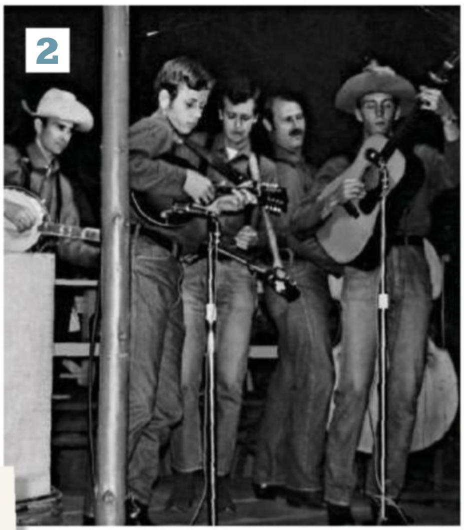

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Courtesy Chris Hillman (2), Alamy, Getty Images (5)

strong camaraderie there, but still, out of that, came some incredible creative music.

**You didn't play on The Byrds' first hit Mr Tambourine Man. How do you rate it today?**

Even though it opened the floodgates, I never liked that track. I love the song, but I never liked the cut – it was too slick. I always wonder what would've happened if we cut it ourselves. But in a business sense Columbia were hedging their bets, because we were a pretty crude sounding band then. [E Street Band guitarist and radio host] Little Steven recently played one of our early songs and said something like, "That's when The Byrds were learning to play." I didn't get mad. I laughed, 'cos it's partly true. I'd never played bass. Never really even touched one. Didn't know what I was doing, but I listened to Paul McCartney, John Entwistle. I based my playing around how I'd heard bluegrass rhythm guitar, and played off of Roger. He had such great time and rhythm, we all gravitated towards him. I finally started to figure it out after the second or third album. But The Byrds had that rough sound for a while. You couldn't take any of us out of that mix – expect maybe McGuinn – and say, "Oh this guy's a fantastic player."

**In Byrds promo photos you often appear in the background looking very sullen…**

I was a shy guy. I wasn't outgoing. I didn't have the confidence. A lot of that was from my family tragedy, too. It locked me up. I can't say I look back and regret it… well, in a way I wish I had been more confident and out front. But there was already a huge pecking order in The Byrds. Roger and David were two or three years older than the rest of us, and at that age, that's a big gap. Also, Roger was a very experienced musician, had played all over the world. David, too, had been around the country, seasoned, and was a totally ballsy guy. And Gene was this powerful charismatic guy.

**In the Gene Clark documentary, The Byrd Who Flew Alone, you marvel at where his creativity and lyrics came from.**

It's not the classic definition of idiot savant, but it's damn close. This divinely inspired prose would pour out of him, this rural kid from Missouri. Funny thing is I never saw him with a book. So I don't know where that kind of poetry came from. He'd write four or five songs a week, and two if not three were fantastic. Most prolific guy I've ever known. I recorded [Clark's] She Don't Care About Time on this new album. That song stuck with me all these years. Here's Gene, a 19-year-old guy writing a lyric like that. We all aspired to write lyrics like him.

"When I **look back** on myself, I was **innocent**, and **not real bright**. But I managed to **survive**."

**What was the reason behind Gene leaving The Byrds in 1966?**

I never thought there was anything unbalanced about him in the early days. He was the most normal man. With The Byrds, success came along fast and threw us for a loop. It affects you. Part of you thinks it will never end, but part of you's too scared to even look around the bend. I talked to Gene about it, in my immature youthful way. I said, "Why are you doing this? Why are you leaving?" He was having so many issues. Maybe [Byrds management] wanted to market him solo, 'cos here's this guy who's writing a bunch of songs and has all this talent. But when you remove one part of the original entity a bit of the essence is gone. We missed Gene's songwriting for sure, but at the same time, when Gene left, it gave me the chance to step up.

**The split with David Crosby… do you think that was an inevitable development?**

David was a handful. He managed to derail a lot of things. I remember we had an offer to do an ad for Fresca, the soda. He was adamant we're not doing that. Part of it was the idea of selling out. But it was a lot of money, a lot of money. So we pass on it. Three months later Crosby comes to Dickson – "Hey, is that Fresca thing still on the table?" Dickson says, "Ray Charles took it" (*laughs*). He was always shooting himself in the foot. But I love him. Even into his mid-'70s, he's still shooting from the hip. He's a fantastic guy and fantastically talented. Working with him was always interesting… the understatement of the day.

**The Byrds' 1968 album *Sweetheart Of The Rodeo* is considered a landmark of country rock. But from the outside, it's a little perplexing as to why you and Roger seemingly turned over the direction of the band to a hired sideman, Gram Parsons.**

Well, he was enthusiastic. He was hungry musically. And he brought two wonderful songs to *Sweetheart*… in Hickory Wind and One Hundred Years…. It's the one album where McGuinn and I didn't write any songs. It's not my favourite record, but it did open the floodgates for West Coast country rock. And I had an ally to make that happen in Gram. ➢

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**The record took you to Nashville, and the Grand Ole Opry.**

When we were on the Opry, it was a live radio show. We were guests of Tompall And The Glaser Brothers. We were supposed to do Sing Me Back Home by Merle Haggard. Gram takes over the moment and says, "No, no, we're gonna do Hickory Wind for my grandmother" – some story he made up. The Opry people were furious. You don't do that in Nashville. At the time it felt rebellious, but it was Gram leading us into the abyss. That's when I should've known! (*laughs*). As we got to Europe on tour, The Rolling Stones came around, and Gram became enamoured with them. Mick and Keith took us to Stonehenge. At four in the morning the sun's coming up and Roger and I are walking and Gram's like running, chasing after the Stones, trying to keep up with them. And Roger is going, "Oh boy." It progressively got worse.

**Then Gram bailed on The Byrds' ill-fated South African tour. You and McGuinn regrouped with Clarence White and Gene Parsons. Why didn't you stay with the band?**

I guess I was frustrated and wanted to do something else. That's when Gram came back into my life – Satan's helper (*laughs*). I regret not doing more with The Byrds. *Dr. Byrds & Mr. Hyde* was good, but they didn't do such great records after that. I can say that in all honesty. Instead, I went off to do The Flying Burrito Brothers with Gram. The idea sounded great: "Let's do a country band." Plus, it was a fresh start. Gram and I shared a house together in the San Fernando Valley and cranked out those songs for [*Gilded Palace Of Sin*]. Gram was a great co-writer and those songs still hold up. It was a true collaboration, though I think Gram took it into a more tongue-in-cheek place. I never would've thought of getting Nudie suits and all that. Parsons was the funniest man in the world. Very bright, almost existed on a different plane. For about a year or two – from *Sweetheart…* through the first Burritos album – he was an amazing guy to work with.

**You've described your relationship with Gram as being like "brothers." His father also committed suicide. Were you bonded by that shared experience?**

It's a very good point. We did share that. But his family were like a Tennessee Williams play. His father shot himself on Christmas Eve, his mother was a terrible alcoholic. When his mother was in hospital [his step-father] Bob Parsons – who was like a snake oil salesman – would bring her airline bottles of liquor. She died in the hospital, and he adopted the kids and manipulated their trust funds. The problem with poor Parsons was he was never, in the literal sense, hungry. He grew up in a house like Tara from Gone With The Wind, servants and everything. He had a trust fund coming in – he didn't have that part of him that kept him in balance. In the Burritos he started to trade off his career aspirations for more hedonistic pursuits. It became more important for him to get high or hang out, than pursue this stuff with any work ethic. Until time came I had to throw him out of the band. He was given everything, and it gave him a false sense of the world.

**You, on the other hand, seemed to relish a certain kind of personal discipline. In Pamela Des Barres' I'm With The Band she notes you were the one guy she wanted but couldn't have.**

(*Laughs*) Well, I have this theory, I think the first 12 years of your life will stay with you, through the most tempting things that you will encounter. Not that I was an angel. I made some bad choices like everybody else. But the first 12 years of my life my parents taught me responsibility, values, and morals, and that if I screwed up I had to face up to that. So part of what Pamela says is true. It was probably how I survived working with some pretty out-there guys.

**After the Burritos, you joined Stephen Stills in Manassas. You seem to be drawn to these magnetic but hard-to-handle artists…**

I needed the stimulation. Stills was at the top of his game. A phenomenal player and singer. I learned from all these people. It just happens that I'm the one that's always trying to calm the rabid wolf. [Manassas] only went on for a couple years – the first album was great, second album not-so-good.

**Then it was an ill-fated reunion of the original Byrds.**

Aah…(*with audible disgust*)… that was like a train wreck. Everyone was so afraid of stepping on each other's toes. And my songs were horrid, I'll admit. Gene's songs saved that record. When he did Neil Young's (See The Sky) About To Rain and Full Circle, those were great. The rest of it – horrid. We entered that wanting to make a good record, but veered so far away from who we were. Everyone had their own careers going and coming back trying to recapture that, it didn't work. No one was running the pirate ship, so it went into the rocks.

## CHRISROCKS

The heights of Hillman.
By **Sid Griffin**.

**PSYCHFOLK A GO-GO**

### The Byrds

★★★★★

Younger Than Yesterday

(COLUMBIA, 1967)

In the way George Harrison broke out as a songwriter on *Revolver*, Chris Hillman's four solo compositions and co-credit on So You Want To Be A Rock & Roll Star? gave notice of a new Byrds talent to be reckoned with. Inspired by Paul McCartney's bass lines and melodic gifts, encouraged by session work done in late '66 alongside supportive South African musicians, Hillman burst forth on The Byrds' classic fourth album and was for evermore a musical name to drop.

**LIFE AFTER GRAM**

### The Flying Burrito Brothers

★★★★

Authorized Bootleg: Fillmore East, New York, N.Y., Late Show, November 7, 1970

(HIP-O-SELECT, 2011)

The later Burritos were a live force of considerable power. Of the dozen songs on this 2011 release, Hillman sings on 10 of them, plays bass like a Bakersfield McCartney and picks dynamite bluegrass mandolin on two tunes. The setlist choices of Byrds material, C&W staples, Burrito faves and R&B oldies illustrates this is Chris Hillman's band and his personal version of Cosmic American Music.

**ROOTS MANOUEVRE**

### Chris Hillman

★★★★

Desert Rose

(SUGAR HILL, 1984)

On his second solo album, Hillman sounds completely relaxed and confident. Revisiting country hits performed live by the Burritos, playing old favourites from his youthful days at The Blue Guitar in San Diego, and with two cuts (Desert Rose, Ashes Of Love) pointing directly to his C&W chart success later in the decade, Hillman never sounded more at home. His particular blend herein of Bakersfield country, folk music, and traditional bluegrass with a hint of rock confirms his status as a true Hall of Famer.

**You followed that project with the country rock supergroup, The Souther-Hillman-Furay Band.**

It was David Geffen's idea. I love J.D. [Souther] and Richie [Furay], but it was like baking a cake, throw in some ingredients – but it didn't come out right. (*Pointing to the S-H-F Band gold record award on his wall*) There it is! The joke was they shipped it gold over the state line. The returns are probably still in Geffen's basement (*laughs*). Not that long ago, J.D. and Richie and I got together. They said there was interest in a reunion tour. I wasn't buying it. Nobody ever comes up and raves about those records.

**You didn't give up on bands though. You reunited with Roger and Gene as McGuinn, Clark & Hillman.**

In the '70s, every group I was in sounded like a law firm (*laughs*). Roger and Gene had started as a duet. They figured they could get a better deal if I was involved. I dunno why we didn't call it The Byrds. I think we probably wanted to avoid that association. That first Capitol record wasn't bad; smooth, slick with strings, and released in the middle of the disco era. It's OK. Once again, Gene had the best songs on it.

**Around this time The Byrds' legacy shows up in the new wave and alternative movements.**

It was gratifying. Personally, I'd rather have a musical legacy. The bank account disappears, but if you're leaving a path for someone, that means something. You can't deny that Byrds sound you hear in Petty or R.E.M. That's something you aspire to do. Maybe I was just the bass player, but I was part of the unit that created that legacy. I'm very proud.

**The late '80s brought you commercial success in mainstream country music with The Desert Rose Band. Was that a surprise?**

I wasn't looking to do that. The last thing I wanted to do was start another band. I'd been playing solo, but all of a sudden we have this great band with Herb [Pedersen] and John Jorgenson and we get on the charts. I said, "Wow this is not supposed to happen." But we had a string of hits, a couple of Number 1s. Strangely enough the country people accepted us immediately. It wasn't based on me being in The Byrds – most people didn't even know that. They accepted us for who we were. It was also great because it was me finally coming into my own. All those years in all those other bands, I'd been the lieutenant. With Desert Rose Band I was the captain.

**There've been a couple of brief Byrds reunions down the years. The last one was in 2000. Is that it?**

That happened because Crosby and I were on a benefit for Fred Walecki who ran the Santa Monica Civic Center, and everybody in town was playing this show – Jackson Browne, Ry Cooder… Roger was coming to do a photo shoot with us for Vanity Fair. At the shoot, we invited him down, and talked him into playing a couple of songs. At soundcheck we had Glyn Johns' son Ethan playing drums, and I borrowed this girl's bass. We started playing,

**"When you're least expecting things, they fall into your lap": Chris Hillman, Ventura, California, August 4, 2017; (below) Tom Petty.**

right into Turn! Turn! Turn! and it was like no time had gone by. Everyone at the soundcheck just stopped dead in their tracks. It was fantastic. People went crazy that night too. That was the last time we played, and probably will be the last ever. I don't see it happening. So that was a nice – though I hate this word – "closure" to the whole thing.

**How surprised were you to be back in the studio this year making a new record with Tom Petty?**

I didn't think I'd ever record again. The record business as I knew it is gone. But when Petty was out last year with Mudcrutch, he hired Herb Pedersen to sing background vocals, and somewhere along the way they conjured up the idea of producing me. I didn't have a record deal, but having Tom's name made it easier to get one. I said to Tom, "I'd love to work with you, but you haven't even heard the songs." He said: "I trust you." So we went to his studio in January and it started to flow. It was so painless, a labour of love.

**McGuinn and Crosby guest on the album, you also record a couple of Byrds songs, including Bells Of Rhymney – why that one?**

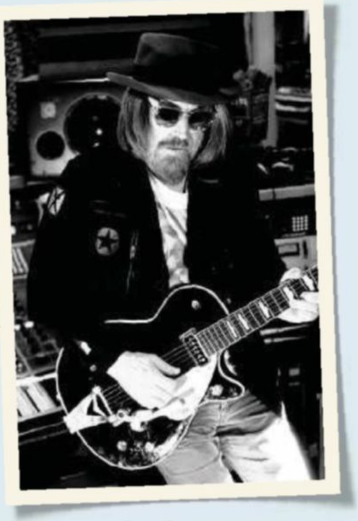
I've always said if there was one song that would describe The Byrds it was that. Pete Seeger dealt us two winning hands in Turn! Turn! Turn! and Bells Of Rhymney. The original recording was special because we were just finding our sound – and of course there was David, Roger and Gene's beautiful singing. I told Herb I'd love to have David do the harmonies. David loves Herb. And David, in his inimitable way, always jokes with me, "I don't know why Herb's working for you" (*laughs*). He spent a long time putting his part on but it came out great. I may not ever record again, so it was something I wanted to do. All while we're recording I'm going, "I don't know how this is happening!" 'Cos I was retired. I didn't expect it. But that's how The Byrds were, too. Sometimes when we're least expecting things, that's when they fall into your lap.

*Chris Hillman's new studio album Bidin' My Time is out now on Rounder Records.*

Rachael Wright, Lori Stoll

# "Chris Hillman invented country rock!"

## Tom Petty talks to Bob Mehr about working with the former Byrd and Burrito on his new solo album.



"ME AND the guys in The Byrds, we're all old, old friends. Roger McGuinn and I have been pals since the '70s. That's when I met Chris as well. I was so flattered that they liked what I was doing and they've been very encouraging over the years. From time to time Chris and I would cross paths and talk.

Mainly, I was interested in doing this record because I've always been a huge fan of Chris. [Guitarist/vocalist] Herb Pedersen, who went on tour with us in Mudcrutch, really planted the seed and he was really crucial in the studio, 'cos he's like Chris's right hand. Thing is, Chris is not interested in show business. I doubt he ever has been. He's a musician, in the purest sense, and a very good one. What really interests him the most is being around other talented musicians. It's all about playing and singing for him – it's not about anything else.

With this record, Chris picked the songs. We first sat down in my studio and he played a selection of things on the acoustic guitar for me. We agreed to keep the production really simple. We got together and tracked the songs live. Most – really, all of the tracks – were cut with Chris and the guys sitting in a semi-circle playing that way. Then some of the [Heartbreakers] like Benmont Tench and Steve Ferrone came in and added overdubs.

Actually, we cut one song live with drums – Here She Comes. I played electric guitar, Steve played drums, and Chris played bass, which I guess he hadn't done in a long while. And it rocked, man. Let me tell you this guy is a great bass player. He is no slouch. Even Ferrone was raving to me about how good Chris is. Steve didn't really know Chris's [history] that well. But he was absolutely raving and Steve doesn't give out bass player compliments very much!

To me, Chris invented country rock, more than anyone I can think of. As far as taking country music and trying to nurture it into a new form, he is absolutely the first guy that really did that. Gram Parsons tends to get that distinction a lot – but I'm sorry, Chris was even ahead of him. If you go back into The Byrds' catalogue and hear stuff like Time Between, I think Chris predates anybody. That's not to slight Gram, but I don't think Chris has gotten the credit he deserves. For me this new record is the closest I've heard where he's stepping back nearer to that Flying Burrito Brothers territory.

Chris has a lot of sides to him, though. I produced a young group called The Shelters, and one of them, Josh Jové, was helping engineer the Chris session. He gave Chris a copy of their record – it's this whacked-out psychedelic thing and Chris came in the next day raving about the record. I said, Well, you should do a record like that, because they're very influenced by your *Notorious Byrd Brothers* period. And he said, 'I would do that.' I said, Really? You'd do a record like that? He said, 'Absolutely'. So maybe we'll do that next (*laughs*). I don't know if he meant it, but it would be interesting for sure. We just had so much fun together and he has such a great sense of humour, I'd love to do another record with him."

# THINK FOR YOURSELF

Getty Images

**Growing up the son of George was never normal, but with his first solo LP under his own name DHANI HARRISON is finally forging his own electronic musical identity. "No offence," he tells DAVID HUTCHEON, "but I think Beatles fans might not get it."**

YOUR PARENTS ALWAYS TELL YOU NOT TO DO STUFF," SAYS DHANI Harrison, leaning back into the blue cushions of his 1960s pod-seat. "I understand why my dad didn't want me going on stage – The Beatles had certain liberties taken away, and they were all traumatised by that – but he was happy about me being a musician. You can't tell someone not to do something. They've got to find out for themselves why they shouldn't."

It's the eyes that get you first. MOJO is greeted at Harrison's Santa Monica nerve-centre by his manager, who guides us past covetable prints of rock's finest on-stage and the statue of the seven-headed horse from Indian mythology that would become the logo of Dark Horse Records, George's label after Apple, towards a shortish bloke in Rip Curl baseball cap and Game Of Thrones T-shirt. "This is Dhani." He turns to say hi, and there are those same intense brown orbs that burn out from the cover of *Revolver*.

Pausing to light a candle at a shrine adorned with pictures of George Martin, Ravi Shankar, and a DVD of 1987 skater film The Search For Animal Chin, Dhani leads MOJO through the building, past a

**Portrait by RACHAEL WRIGHT**

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**"We get to make the records that are the records we want to make": Dhani Harrison in his Santa Monica studio; (inset opposite) getting the motor racing bug at seven years old with father George, Brands Hatch, October 3, 1985.**

THE CONCERT FOR BANGLADESH
SEPTEMBER 24, 2003
CONCERT FOR GEORGE
BRAINWASHED
HANI HARRISON
PARALLEL

≺ rehearsal room filled with various instruments, his scoring room piled with computers, and his mother's office, a serene space of prints and classy furniture. "Sorry about all the colours," he says as we reach his office, a Day-Glo confection filled with posters, memorabilia from Patrick McGoohan's late-1960s TV series The Prisoner, high-end skateboards and collectible dolls, from Smorkin' Labbit to pink-hued 'Gay Empire' bootleg Star Wars action figures. "I realise it's like something vomited out by a 14-year-old Japanese girl," he says without a hint of shame.

After trying different careers and adopting band names as a mask, Harrison is releasing his solo debut, *IN///PARALLEL*. And so – trying not to mention George until he does – MOJO starts with the customary opening question for a new act: Dhani, do you come from a musical family?

"Actually, I do," he smiles, seeing through the ploy. "My mother's father, Esiquiel Arias, was a singer, and dad recorded him singing these great Mexican songs. My mother's mother was related to Jorge Negrete, who was a film star and singer, I guess at the same level as Elvis or Bing Crosby in Mexico. Dad was a huge fan and had him on our jukebox at home. There's a long line of musicians on both sides."

He may look like his father, and have a similar dry humour, but the Merseyside accent that beguiled Britain in the '60s hasn't been handed down – Thames-side living and a private education saw to that. As he relaxes, though, southern Liverpool's flattened vowels do show through in his speech. But when he impersonates Harry Enfield's comedy Scousers – "Calm down, calm down" – the results are dreadful.

**Born in August 1978, Dhani – named** after notes in the Indian music scale – did not learn about his father's place in popular culture until he complained about being bullied in his first year at primary.

"I said: Why didn't you tell me you were in The Beatles? And he said: 'What is there to tell?' I remember not being mad… well, I was fuming, but feeling I was a leper or something because other kids would chase me, singing Yellow Submarine. Kids are arseholes." While school friends were playing football, Dhani would be at home, at Friar Park in Henley-on-Thames, playing cricket with Eric Clapton, Jim Capaldi ("My dad Number 2"), Jim Keltner and Klaus Voormann.

Nevertheless, his entrance into adult life had nothing to do with show business. "You never want to be like your dad, you want to be like your dad's cool mate," he says, referring to Gordon Murray, who designed Formula 1 cars for Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost. "We built go-karts and bikes. I was obsessed." Heart set on motor racing, he studied physics, engineering, fine arts and industrial design at Brown University in Rhode Island. Ask him about American BMWs or modern reproductions of his father's 1958 Gretsch Duo Jet guitar, and stand back.

Dhani found a position working at McLaren. "I did things that weren't anything to do with my dad to show I was my own person," he says. But music would drag him back to the family business. "By the middle of the 1990s, dad didn't have a deal and his CDs were out of print. He didn't care, but I was pushing him, so we began working on songs I'd thought had been released and then realised that they weren't anywhere except the tapes I'd heard at home. I wouldn't be able to hear them unless he released them, so I said, You've got to get this done, and we were working on stuff when we ran out of time."

George's death in 2001 left the album for his son to finish, with help from Jeff Lynne. "Producing music is no different to designing stuff, so it was an easy transition," he says, "and after that I didn't want to do anything else. I thought, Well, balls to all that, my school career, my job… oh, yeah, I'm a musician now."

*Brainwashed* was released in 2002, spurring a full-time career as guardian of the legacy. The albums for Apple and Dark Horse needed to be remastered and reissued, there was the Concert For George at the Royal Albert Hall and, in 2004,

## "THEN PRINCE GOT ANGRY!"

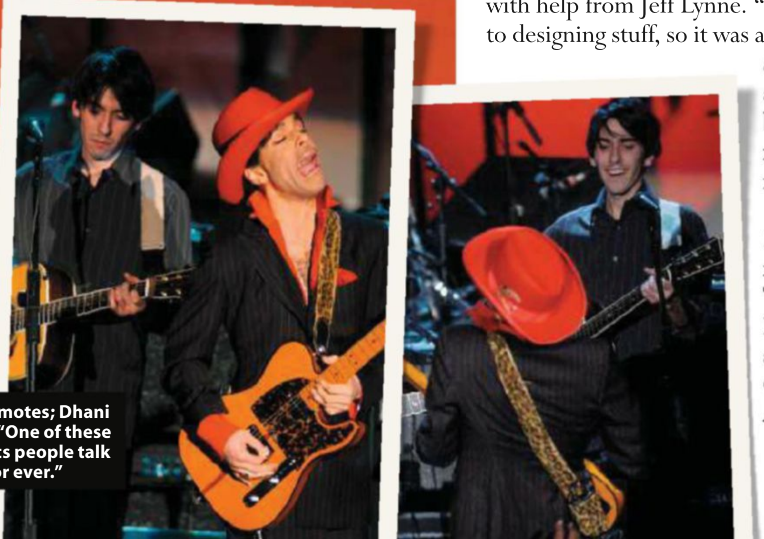
### In 2004, George Harrison was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The ceremony didn't quite go according to plan, as his son remembers.

"EVERYONE has a Prince story, right? And they are all equally strange. He was being inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as well, and he has his whole squad there, all wearing black, and aren't allowed to look him in the eye, no one's allowed to blaspheme and I think he tells that stuff to people to see what they do. I went up to him and said: "Hey man, I've got these cool purple Dark Horse stickers that I've designed for the box set and I guess you kind of like purple." I gave him a couple of stickers and I think he was shocked that I even spoke to him.

The management had shoved that whole thing together in a slapdash manner, which rubbed everyone up the wrong way. There was tension when we went on-stage. I was playing with the Wilburys, which was Tom Petty, The Heartbreakers plus Jeff Lynne, Steve Winwood on Hammond because Traffic were being inducted as well. It was kind of our gang versus Prince's gang. I was in the middle.

Prince had opened the show, then got angry he wasn't in the finale, which was us, so he made the producers put him into our set and we had already rehearsed it with Tom, Jeff and Mark Mann of ELO who was going to do the guitar solo. So part of it was a big slight to us, because we were about to do what we had rehearsed.

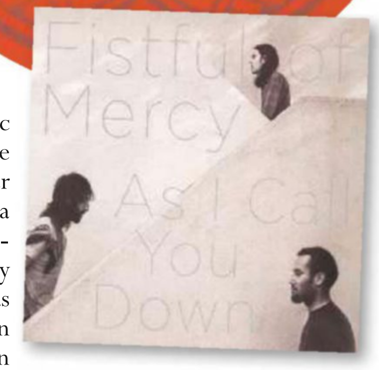
On YouTube you can see me laughing so hard when Prince stepped forward to begin his solo because I know Jeff and Tom haven't seen him coming – what is about to happen is written all over my face. Eventually, even Tom starts laughing – it was so over the top, Prince doing a back-bend into the crowd, that sort of thing, so out of place, but it was a great bit of playing. We were honouring my dad and making it all about him, then Prince got in the middle of it, and it has nothing to do with anything. I couldn't frown because I wasn't bummed out. I was thinking: "This is going to be one of these moments people talk about for ever."


**Prince emotes; Dhani laughs: "One of these moments people talk about for ever."**

Getty Images (3), Rachael Wright

**"I will never not be his son": Dhani in 2017; (opposite) attending the Concert For George premiere (from left) Ringo Starr, Barbara Bach, Dhani, Olivia Harrison, Heather Mills, Paul McCartney; (insets) Dark Horse reissues and logo; Dhani solo releases and distant relative Jorge Negrete.**

> "I FELT LIKE I WAS A LEPER BECAUSE OTHER KIDS WOULD CHASE ME, SINGING YELLOW SUBMARINE."



George was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame [see sidebar].

"I go in cycles – *Brainwashed*, *Concert For George*, *Bangladesh*, *Apple Years*, *Dark Horse Years* – that was never ending for 10 years. It's been almost 16 years since my father left his body, and we've done everything we could possibly do. Now I feel not guilty. I can go and get on with my life."

Having watched the older Beatle children enter public life ("No one seemed to have a chance to develop before they got hammered"), in 2006, Harrison and drummer Oliver Hecks released a four-track EP as thenewno2, a name Dhani admits was more than a tribute to The Prisoner. "The actor playing Number 2 was different every week, you couldn't get to know them. I thought that was a good idea. If you adopt a strategy like that no one can judge you. It was my way of being able to develop as an artist so that I could get all the projects I wanted to do under my belt without getting hurt."

thenewno2 still had a decent media profile, however, releasing *You Are Here* in 2009 and *thefearofmissingout* in 2012, the latter leading to a phone call inviting them to score the 2013 film Beautiful Creatures. "They said, 'We love what you guys have done, how would you like to do a 60-piece orchestra at Abbey Road?' And the pay was a lot better than the zero money we were making releasing records…" Since then, Harrison has scored – he stops to count – "five films, five TV shows", as well as releasing an album as Fistful Of Mercy, with skateboarding buddy Ben Harper and Joseph Arthur.

Which brings us to *IN///PARALLEL*, 10 loud, experimental pieces that sound not unlike the soundtrack to a heart-stopping Hollywood thriller. One of the hammers used to beat the older Beatle kids was that producers tried too hard to make them replicate their fathers – that's not going to happen here. "I used to listen to a lot of Prodigy, Beastie Boys, Rage Against The Machine. Radiohead were my band at university, I was a huge fan of *Hail To The Thief*. The anger and the war and post-September 11, and all this terror, it hit the nail on the head. With the state of the industry, we get to make records that are the records we want to make. I've never made anything to try to succeed, although Fistful Of Mercy was a hit because it was three guys with guitars and that's a tried-and-tested formula.

"My manager and I have had a lot of conversations about how we get the right audience to listen. Is it just going straight to Beatles fans? No offence, but they might not get it. A lot of them do, but a lot are disappointed. How do we get the Massive Attack crowd? The trip-hop metalheads?"

Harrison seems like a grafter, a son who got his work ethic from a dad who paid his dues playing Hamburg for "10,000 hours or whatever". Taking time off to talk about his album seems a welcome respite from scoring a TV series for the team behind Californication and, like everybody in Los Angeles, they need it tomorrow.

"There was nothing really normal in any way about my thirties," the just-turned-39-year-old laughs as he gets ready to slip away, to spend the evening with Deep Purple at the Greek Theatre, "and I will never not be George Harrison's son."

The natch'l bluesman: Taj Mahal, 1968. "Blues was part of a living culture."

# Man Of The World

WHEN AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD **Taj Mahal** HEARD HAVANA AND HONOLULU ON THE SHORT WAVE RADIO, HE TOLD HIMSELF THAT "SOMEDAY I'M GONNA GET TO KNOW WHO THOSE PEOPLE ARE". LATER, HIS FAME AS A SUPER-HIP, STONES-ENDORSED BLUESMAN BUST OPEN THE DOOR TO THE MUSIC OF THE EARTH – FROM MALI TO MUMBAI. "MY THING IS IT'S ALL CONNECTED," HE TELLS **Michael Simmons**

Portrait: **Baron Wolman**

BY THE MIDDLE OF 1968, TAJ MAHAL was living in Los Angeles, but he was aware that something odd was happening on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

"I'm hearin' from John Hammond Jr. and those guys from Canned Heat," he tells MOJO. "I'm hearin' from Jesse Fuller that the scene in England is like off the charts! The English had the gravitas and created the leeway so that everyone was into this music. You turn on the TV in the morning to get the news and the in-and-out music is Howlin' Wolf or B.B. King! They're not afraid to play the music – here they were afraid."

So this one evening Taj and his band were on-stage at the Whisky A Go Go on the Sunset Strip in West Hollywood, California. In addition to the leader from Springfield, Massachusetts on vocals and blues harp were Jesse Edwin Davis on lead guitar, Gary Gilmore on bass and Chuck Blackwell on drums – the latter, three members of the so-called "Oklahoma Mafia", the diaspora of Okie players who'd moved to Los Angeles in the mid-'60s to make it in the music racket. The band was cooking on high heat, while Taj, as was his habit, was singing with his eyes tightly shut.

"So I open my eyes and *wow*! Mick Jagger's dancin'! Keith Richards and Brian Jones are dancing. Charlie Watts wasn't dancin'. Not that he wouldn't or he doesn't dance – he just wasn't. (*Laughs*) And over here is Eric Burdon – and he's dancin'! OK – here we are – an American blues band and here are these English guys that are gettin' their notoriety from the blues – and they're dancing to us!"

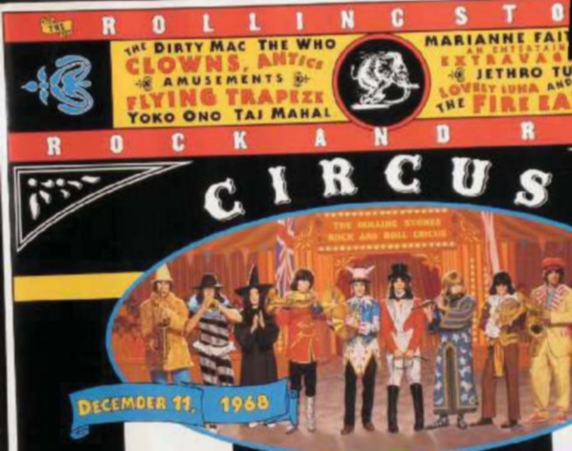
Destiny shook its tail feathers across Taj Mahal's field of vision. "I thought, Here comes your chance – you get off the stage, you need to talk to these guys. So I boldly rolled up and they said (*English accent*) 'Bloody awright, mate!' And I said to Mick and everyone at the table, I don't know what it is you guys got in the water over there, but I've been hearing great things and I wish it was like that here. I know you do projects with different people. If there's anything you're gonna do that you can see us bein' a part of, please don't hesitate to give us a call…"

Sometime afterwards – the exact chronology is vague – a response arrived: "Eight tickets from British Overseas Airways Corporation came in the mail to our office and the rest is history."

In December of '68, the four musicians and four road crew members flew to London to film The Rolling Stones Rock And Roll Circus TV concert, which was to star the Stones, Lennon, Yoko, Clapton, The Who and more. Jagger was allegedly displeased with the Stones' performance and the show and music remained unreleased until 1996. Pete Townshend maintained the Stones "were usurped by Taj Mahal – who was just, as always, extraordinary."

"So I open my eyes and wow! Mick Jagger's dancin'! Keith Richards and Brian Jones are dancing! Charlie Watts wasn't dancin'."

TAJ MAHAL • THE NATCH'L BLUES



Taj and band tore the tent up, establishing themselves as one of America's premier blues-rock groups. More importantly, they were peers. The blues musicians who were the Stones and co's primary influences were old enough to be their fathers – or grandfathers. But Mahal was only a year older than Jagger – a living Robert Johnson in hip '60s threads. Ultimately, like the palace he's named after, Taj became a monument with many rooms. By going from one room to the next, he would connect the musics humans make all over the planet.

WE'RE SITTING WITH TAJ MAHAL AT THE SPORTSmen's Lodge in Studio City, California – a storied hotel that's been around for over a century. The bland conference room we're in serves to further accentuate Taj's singular presence. He's a large man in girth and height, white beard, straw hat, yellow Hawaiian shirt and two pendant necklaces: one a metal replica of a marlin, the other appears to be a shark's tooth.

He's on tour with "junior" bluesman Keb' Mo' – Taj is 75, Keb' is 65 – a duo dubbed TajMo, the eponymous title of their new LP. It's a blast: blues-rooted but thoroughly contemporary soul music. The night before they'd held a Q&A and performed at the Grammy Museum in LA. The setlist was split between Taj (She Caught The Katy), Keb' (Am I Wrong) and TajMo (brotherhood anthem All Around The World). They were clearly enjoying each other's company: finishing the other's sentences, ad-libbing jokes, cracking up.

On-stage, Taj was classic Taj: as fine a soulful shouter and multi-instrumentalist as any alive, but after, backstage, he seemed depleted. Today he's rested and ready to answer questions about an extraordinary career. His speaking voice is a gravelly grumble and he's a stand-up bluesman, constantly breaking into imitations of blues giants and East to West Indian accents. The latter is in his DNA – his father is of Caribbean descent from the islands of St Kitts And Nevis, while his mother is from South Carolina.

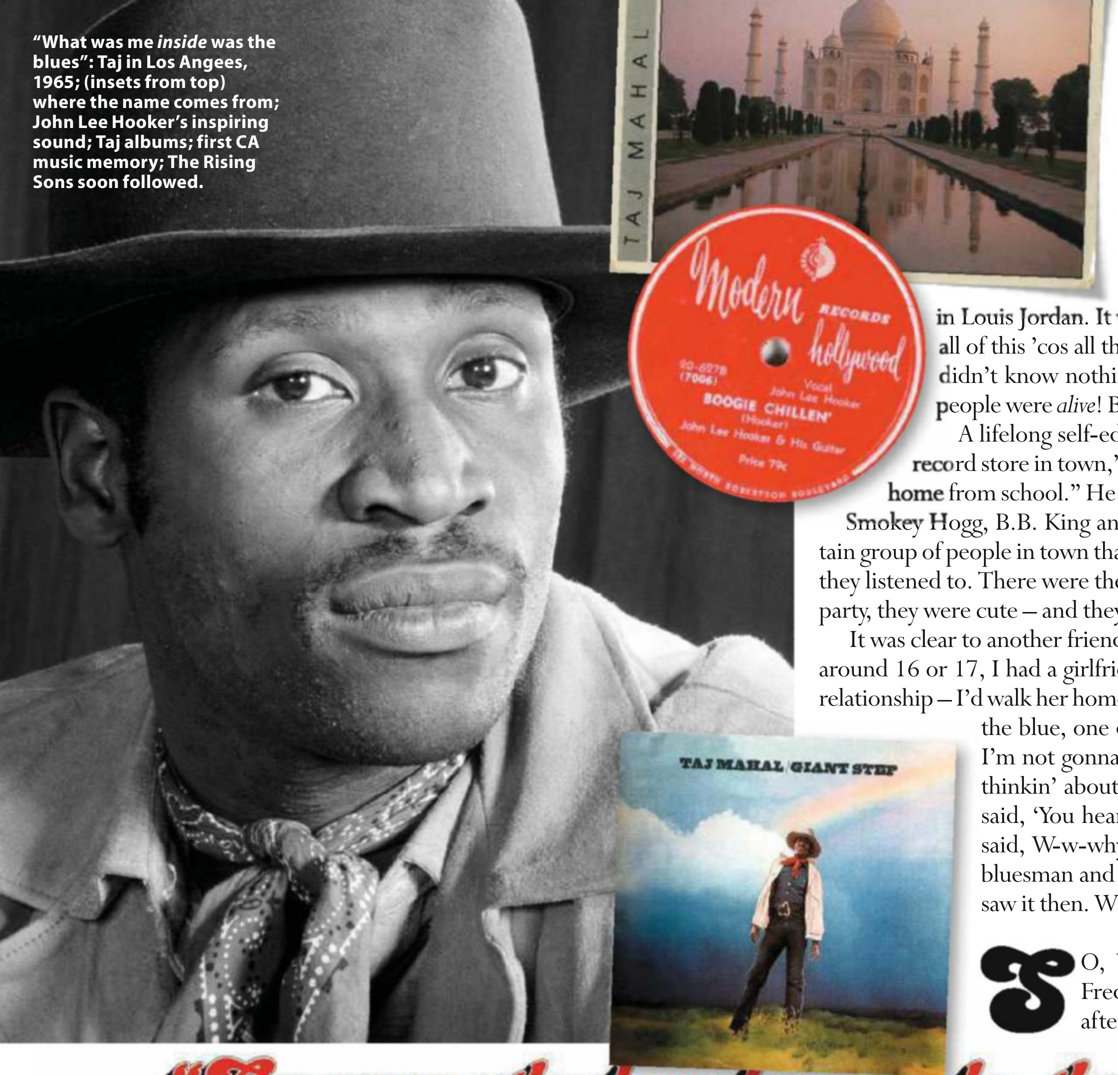
"My father grew up in the era of swing, jump blues, leading up to bebop. My mother was a gospel singer and studied a bit of classical music." Dubbed "The Genius", dad was a pianist, composer and arranger and worked as a copyist for Harlem's big bands in the 1930s. In the '80s, Taj met Ella Fitzgerald in Hawaii. "She was rehearsing one afternoon and I went over. Afterwards I met her and asked, Did you ever hear an old guy named Harry Fredericks? That's my dad. She said, 'Oh my God – you're Genius's boy!'"

Born Henry Saint Clair Fredericks Jr in Harlem, New York, Taj moved with his family to Springfield, Massachusetts when he was still young. His godfather was legendary jump blues bandleader Buddy Johnson, who'd visit the Fredericks home when he was gigging nearby. "I remember my mother cooking for three days. They put us to bed and promised to wake us when the band got there. I'm eight, nine years old and the place is swarming with musicians and they're all excited, looking at the kids, missin' their kids, and there's hat tricks and nickels are comin' out of our ears. I remember thinkin', Someday I'm gonna have a band like this."

A short wave radio brought world music from Havana, Paris, London, Rio De Janeiro. Initially, Latin music excited him. By the time he was five, he recalls hearing Tito Rodriguez, Mario Bauzá, Tito Puente, Chano Pozo with Dizzy Gillespie. One day an exotic ➢

Baron Wolman, Getty Images (2)

Diggin' his roots: (clockwise from above) Taj and admirer, 1974; The Rising Sons on The Rolling Stones Rock And Roll Circus, 1968, Charlie Watts (rear, far left) admires; with Ry Cooder (far right) in The Rising Sons '66; with his own band at the Gold Rush Festival, Lake Amador, CA, 1969; (opposite) early Taj LPs and Circus poster.



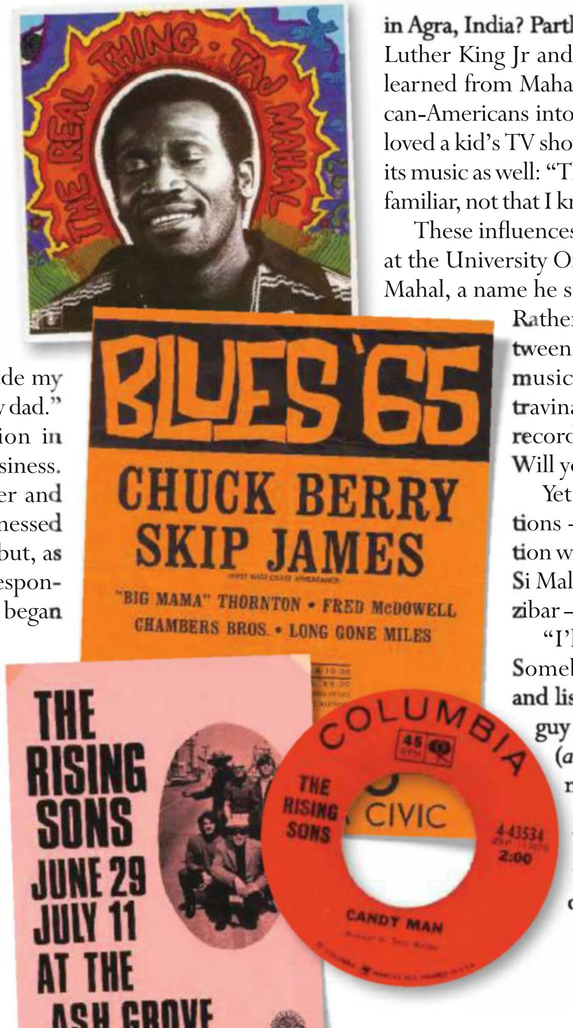
**"What was me *inside* was the blues": Taj in Los Angees, 1965; (insets from top) where the name comes from; John Lee Hooker's inspiring sound; Taj albums; first CA music memory; The Rising Sons soon followed.**

◄ sound emanated from the short wave. "I punched into Honolulu and I heard this music that blew me away – some of the most beautiful music I'd ever heard. I instantly wanted to know these people. I said to myself that someday I'm gonna get to know who those people are."

He began piano lessons around the age of five, but he could play boogie-woogie by ear and the teacher told his mother, "'Mildred, don't waste your money on that boy.' They tried me on clarinet and that squeaked too damn much. Trombone made my head buzz. Then tragedy struck – we lost my dad."

Henry Sr had gone into construction in Springfield, eventually starting his own business. He was killed when a tractor tipped over and crushed his skull. Twelve-year-old Taj witnessed the aftermath and was traumatised by it, but, as the eldest son, he was forced to become responsible for the survival of his family and he began taking whatever work a kid could get.

Soon after, a discovery in a closet changed everything. His mother remarried a local widower and Taj found his step-father's guitar. A new kid in town from North Carolina was blues adept and shared his knowledge with Taj. "He taught me all that Jimmy Reed stuff that was popular at the time. And Boogie Chillen' – John Lee Hooker – one of my favourite pieces of music *ever*. Classic – they miked the bottom of his shoes and made that great sound. The world was never gonna be the same after that."



He noticed this thing called "the blues" was everywhere. "Blues was in Basie. It was in Ellington. It was *really* in Louis Jordan. It was *really* in Wynonie Harris. I heard all of this 'cos all these people were alive at that time – I didn't know nothin' 'bout no Robert Johnson – those people were *alive*! Blues was part of a living culture."

A lifelong self-education had begun. "We had a great record store in town," Taj recalls. "We'd stop in on the way home from school." He found records by Lightnin' Hopkins, Smokey Hogg, B.B. King and T-Bone Walker. "There was a certain group of people in town that were really *down home* – that's what they listened to. There were the down home girls – they laugh loud, party, they were cute – and they liked to hear the music!"

It was clear to another friend where he was headed. "When I was around 16 or 17, I had a girlfriend from Mississippi. It was a kiddie relationship – I'd walk her home from the movies. Completely out of the blue, one day she said to me, 'You know what, I'm not gonna marry you.' I thought I'm not even thinkin' about that yet! I said, *What'd you say*? She said, 'You heard me! I'm not gonna marry you.' I said, W-w-why? She said, ''Cos you're gonna be a bluesman and you ain't never gonna be home.' She saw it then. What was me *inside* was that blues."

"There were the down home girls – they laugh loud, party, they were cute – and they liked to hear the music!"

SO, WHY AND HOW DID HENRY Fredericks Jr become Taj Mahal – named after a 17th century marble mausoleum in Agra, India? Partly, it's a measure of the impact of Martin Luther King Jr and his debt to the non-violent resistance learned from Mahatma Gandhi, a doorway for many African-Americans into the culture of India. As a child, Henry loved a kid's TV show set in the sub-continent – and took to its music as well: "The rhythms coming out of the music was familiar, not that I knew what a tabla or sitar or veena was…"

These influences fused, and while leading an R&B band at the University Of Massachusetts, he dubbed himself Taj Mahal, a name he says translates as "crown in the palace". Rather than differences, Taj saw affinities between cultures: "I later recorded with Indian musicians [Vishwa Mohan Bhatt and Chitravina N. Ravikiran] on the *Mumtaz Mahal* record [1995]. My thing is, it's all connected! Will you stop thinking it's all in a little box?"

Yet throughout his world music explorations – from Jamaica (for a 1992 collaboration with Cedella Marley), to France (T'Aimer Si Mal, a song with Johnny Hallyday), to Zanzibar – the blues has remained his foundation.

"I'll tell ya somethin' funny about that. Somebody had Brownie McGhee sit down and listen to Ravi Shankar. So at the end the guy said, 'So whadda ya think Brownie?' (*adopts a guttural voice*) 'Aww that ain't nothin' but blues in minor!'"

Taj references Beach Music, the black soul genre popular with whites in the Carolinas. "There's a certain freedom in blues. For instance, you talk to

Getty Images, Jay Blakesberg

white Southern guys about Beach Music and they say, ‘These are the kinds of things we wanna say to our girlfriends, but we can’t say ’em. But these black guys are free enough in their expression that I’m dancing and these songs are comin’ on and *she’s gettin’ the idea*!’ There’s a freedom in our music.”

In 1965, Taj headed to California: “The first thing I saw when I got there was ‘Blues ’65’ at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium with Chuck Berry, The Chambers Brothers, Mississippi Fred McDowell.” He formed a rock band called The Rising Sons that included a hotshot teenage slide guitarist named Ry Cooder.

“Cooder was the quintessential guitarist,” says Taj. “Knowledgeable about every kind of music: R&B, old blues, Joseph Spence, Sleepy John Estes, Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, Robert Pete Williams, Howlin’ Wolf. Jesse Lee Kincaid [played] 12-string guitar – he took lessons from Reverend Gary Davis. Gary Marker [a veteran of Captain Beefheart’s band] was a jazz bassist and Ed Cassidy [later of Spirit] was a jazz drummer.” In the mid ’60s, The Rising Sons became popular on LA’s rock circuit and signed to Columbia Records.

The band released one single, but the rest of the album remained unreleased until 1992. “We were too far ahead for the lumbering leviathan of the music business,” says Taj. They were a slightly jarring combination of blues rock (usually Taj singing) and folk rock (usually Kincaid), and given Taj’s superior vocals and Cooder’s roots mastery the former style was more musically successful than the latter. They soon broke up and Taj put together his own band that would eventually solidify with Davis, Gilmore and Blackwell.

“We opened for Martha And The Vandellas and The Temptations at the Trip and for Otis Redding at the Whisky,” recounts Taj. “When they said we’re gonna open for Otis (*whistles*) – we couldn’t play fast enough to get off the stage to hear him!” Taj has covered Redding hits over the years and the influence on his singing is obvious. Is it conscious? “Oh yeah – I don’t hide it. Otis represents the earth, man! He represents *solid*.”

Taj’s first two solo LPs – 1968’s *Taj Mahal* and *The Natch’l Blues* – met with less than huge commercial success, but are revered among musicians. “They’re two of my favourite albums of all time,” says Bonnie Raitt. “Like Leavin’ Trunk – all those songs to me were so refreshingly rearranged, they weren’t the same sacrosanct blues. He can sing rings and play harp around most blues people of *any* generation.”

IN THE 50 INTERVENING YEARS, TAJ MAHAL HAS been involved in over 50 albums – a striking work-rate. The one-two punch of his first two albums with the Davis/Gilmore/Blackwell band became a trilogy with 1969’s *Giant Step/De Old Folks At Home*, a double set that many Taj fans consider his finest. The first disc was his last with the three Okies and his cover of Carole King and Gerry Goffin’s title track showed off his ability to transform a pop song into the blues. The second disc saw solo Taj weaving spells on a National steel-bodied guitar, banjo and harmonica.

He followed that with a left-turn: 1971’s *The Real Thing* – a live recording with a big band including four tubas. “For certain songs, my feeling was that they weren’t as good as the live versions,” Taj told PopMatters’ John Garratt in 2012. “The songs were in progress and in motion. I just felt they had more energy.”

From here, his music became more eclectic, more experimental, and he began incorporating Caribbean sounds, covering The Slickers’ Johnny Too Bad in ’74 – the year Clapton covered I Shot The Sheriff. Taj also took up the kalimba – a relative of African mbira/thumb piano – showcasing it (in an Afrocentric dashiki) on Flip Wilson’s national TV show in January ’73. This hunger for new sounds was contagious and Taj’s fellow rockers took note. “The way Taj melded picking styles and Caribbean influences, it opened my eyes,” says Bonnie Raitt. “It influenced the way that I arrange and write and conceive. He helped plant that seed that you can take [sounds] from somewhere else. I’m sure a lot of jazz people had done it for years, but Taj was one of the first people who’d done it with the blues.”

In 1976, Taj swopped major label Columbia for major label Warners but he didn’t stick around for long, and a move to Hawaii in 1981 signalled a retreat from the music business frontline, although the islands’ ukuleles and slack-key guitars would later figure on albums including *Sacred Island* (1998) and *Hanapepe Dream* (2001). His ongoing passion for global fusions would win strong critical acclaim and, eventually, a recommendation from President Obama for 1999’s *Kulanjan*, a collaboration with Malian kora master Toumani Diabaté. Key to Taj Mahal’s half-century of work has been this desire to interact with musicians from around the world. He really has fulfilled his youthful wish “to get to know who these people are”.

One last question, then: has he discovered something that all these eclectic musics share?

Taj answers without a pause. “Africa ain’t a (*snaps his fingers*) away from whatever it is you’re listening to. The last piece of that was the blues. When I got to play with the [African] guys on *Kulanjan*, I had something to offer – Afro-American music – 400 years of the music here that they’re not familiar with because we left on a boat.”

And what did he learn from that? Taj stands up. “What I’ve learned is that you never stop learning.” And then the crown in the palace leaves for another of his many rooms. Ⓜ

**“There’s a power to be drawn”: Keb’ Mo’ (right) with Taj, 2017.**

## “He’s A Magical Dude!”

### HOW KEB’ MO’ GOT SCHOOLED BY TAJ MAHAL – TWICE. BY MICHAEL SIMMONS.

**BLUESMAN KEB’ MO’ – AKA Kevin Moore – *is currently touring with Taj Mahal*** behind their new collaboration *TajMo*. Mo’ was barely 18 when he first saw Taj – his elder by a decade and change – when the latter came to perform for a high school student assembly in 1969.

“Someone no one heard of came in and plays this bluesy music that didn’t sound like the blues that anybody had ever heard – it was quite a day for me,” says Keb’. “The other blues was more like what your parents listened to, like B.B. King. But Taj was cool – his blues were played by a young person – he was only in his mid-to-late-twenties. The ’60s were upon us and Taj comes in with this big hat and this big feather sticking out of it.”

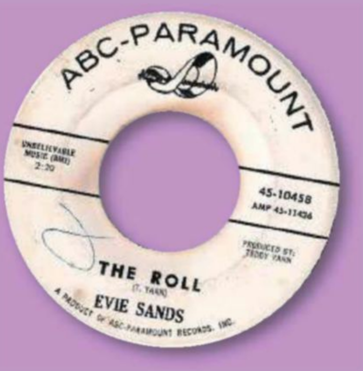
Mo’’s experience with Taj unfolded slowly: “About two years later this friend gave me a tape – it was *The Natch’l Blues*. I wore it out. I saw him live, supporting Sly Stone, but I didn’t meet him until 1993. He was recording *Dancing The Blues* and a friend took me to meet him. I could hear that he filtered the blues through his own experience and instincts – finding his own voice. The same way with Robert Johnson – I could hear Robert Johnson going in and finding himself. When you push boundaries some people are gonna fall off the wagon. Even though it might seem negative, that to me is a sign of movement and energy.”

While breaking rules appeals to him, Keb’ argues that the blues remains a continuum. “The ones that came before you set a precedent,” he says. “They started the train moving. In all that history and experience is the strength of your tribe that made you who you are. There’s a power to be drawn from that.”

And so it is with Taj. “He’s well-travelled, well-educated and deeply rooted in Southern, Caribbean and African culture,” says Mo’. “You’re riding around with a college professor!”

Work on *TajMo* came in bursts. “What I remember most about the process was how open he was,” says Mo’. “I didn’t know what to expect when we started working. I was a little intimidated, but he was easy to work with – so open-minded. He’s a magical dude.”

# THIS WOMAN'S WORK



**EVIE SANDS had it all: the songs, the voice, the looks. And yet music-biz machinations and institutional chauvinism ensured that stardom eluded her. But don't you *dare* go calling her 'the unluckiest person in pop'. "We should probably set the record straight, right?" she instructs ANDREW MALE.**

EVIE SANDS CUT HER FIRST RECORD WHEN SHE was still a teenager. Those powerhouse vocals belting out the vital imperatives on ABC-Paramount's shimmy-whirling 1963 dance single The Roll were recorded when Sands was just 16 years old.

"No, no, no," says Evie Sands, laughing. "Where'd you get those dates? Wikipedia? They're not correct. I actually started doing this when I was nine years old. Started making records at 12. I was a freak of nature."

Like pretty much everything about Evie Sands, the truth is more incredible than the myth, and the myth is pretty startling: the teenage girl from East Flatbush, Brooklyn who cut three of the finest records of the '60s, only to see them hijacked by others, who wrote big '70s hits for Barbra Streisand, Gladys Knight, and Dusty Springfield, but spent the '80s and much of the '90s living in seclusion.

"That's another one," says Evie. "I was never a recluse. I've been described as 'cursed', 'the most unlucky person in pop'. That's caused me more sadness and emotional discomfort than the events themselves. We should probably set the record straight, right?"

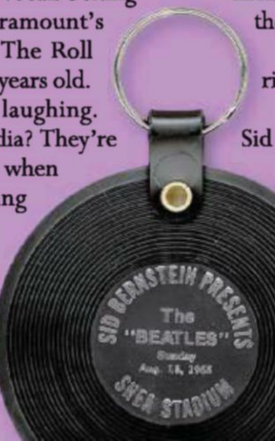
EVIE SANDS' EARLIEST MEMORY IS OF SINGING. IT WAS as natural as breathing. "I'd sing myself to sleep," she says. "I'd sing for neighbours. There was never a time I didn't sing. Mum was a singer. In musical theatre. We'd listen to Gershwin, Cole Porter, Ella, Frank. A music fest. Dad worked in the garment industry, then the restaurant business with one of his brothers. This very high-end Manhattan place. Frank Sinatra came in a lot. Dad also did promotion for Grant's liquor. He'd go to the hippest New York bars and say 'Get rid of Glenlivet!' He was right up front."

At night, Evie would listen to the R&B stations, Little Willie John, Marvin Gaye. One night, one of the stations was promoting a talent contest. First prize: the chance to cut a record. Turns out, the whole thing was a racket.

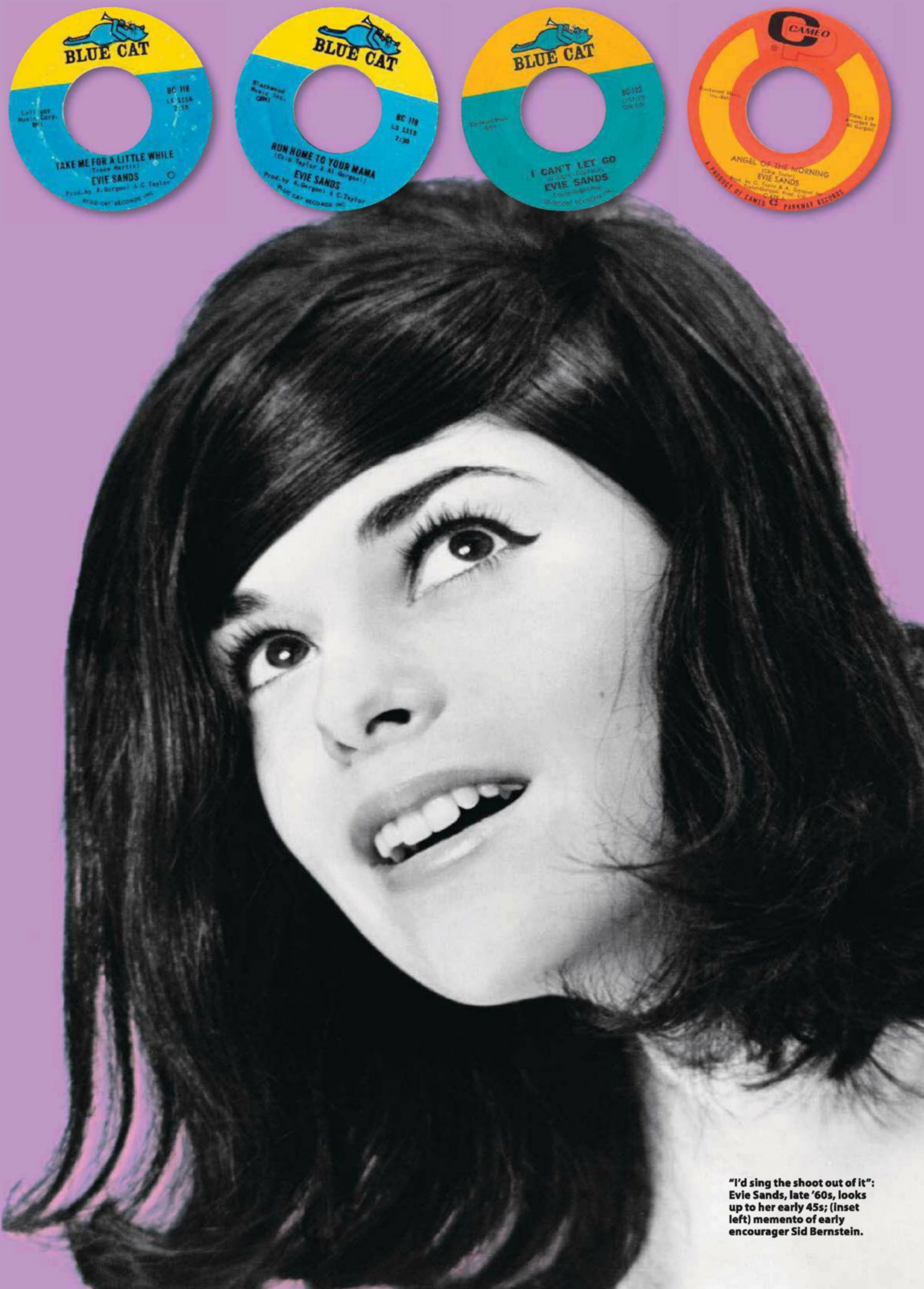
"I was one of the three finalists," says Sands. "But they had ringers in, who won the first and second prizes."

Fortunately for Sands, one of the judges was the promoter Sid Bernstein, the man who brought The Beatles to America: "He said, 'Hey kid, you got talent! Don't let this thing bother you.'"

Bernstein put the word out. Sands' mother and elder brother took the 11-year-old Evie to meet with publishers and labels. Brooklyn songwriter Teddy Vann worked with Evie on her first ➤



Getty Images, courtesy of Evie Sands


BLUE CAT
TAKE ME FOR A LITTLE WHILE
EVIE SANDS
BLUE CAT
RUN HOME TO YOUR MAMA
EVIE SANDS
BLUE CAT
I CAN'T LET GO
EVIE SANDS
CAMEO
ANGEL OF THE MORNING
EVIE SANDS
A PRODUCT OF CAMEO PARKWAY RECORDS

**"I'd sing the shoot out of it": Evie Sands, late '60s, looks up to her early 45s; (inset left) memento of early encourager Sid Bernstein.**

**"WE'D HAVE MEETINGS WITH RCA SUITS. PEOPLE WOULD GREET ME AND THEN, FOR THE ENTIRE CONVERSATION, EVERYTHING WAS ADDRESSED TO MICHAEL."**

Jazz Hot
EVIE SANDS
ANY WAY THAT YOU WANT ME
A&M

Still glowing: 1974 cover shoot for Sands' *Estate Of Mind* and (bottom) for this year's Shine For Me EP; (insets) Evie's mentors Chip Taylor and (below) Al Gorgoni; (below left) with June Carter (left) and Johnny Cash on the latter's TV show, June 14, 1969.

≺ single, The Roll/My Dog, which in turn earned her a meeting with fellow songwriter and East Coast session guitarist Al Gorgoni.

"Al was working at one of the New York publishing companies," says Sands. "My uncle, the restaurant uncle, he knew the publisher. I think he rubber-stamped something: 'Yeah, this is my niece, you should have a listen.' So Al was tasked with that."

Gorgoni brought in his writing partner, a 24-year-old former professional golfer called Chip Taylor. "They met my parents and auditioned themselves," says Sands. "It was *real* serious. Could Evie be alone with these guys? Obviously they passed muster, because we went in and cut a record."

Recorded with "the Wrecking Crew East" set-up of Al Gorgoni, Trade Martin, Al Rodgers, Artie Butler and Hugh McCracken, Sands' first Taylor-Gorgoni production, of Trade Martin's Take Me For A Little While/Run Home To Your Mama, might be one of the most life-affirming records of the '60s. For the A-side, Sands' deep soulful voice lends weight and power to a lyric of female supplication, while the B-side is a total rejection of the A-side's 'doormat' lyrics: "Run home to your mama/And let her do it all for you."

"There were so many doormat lyrics," says Sands. "'Oh treat me however you want'. The thing is, I was still a kid. I didn't understand that desperation, so I just went with the power of the music. I'd sing the shoot out of it. It was fun."

Sadly, few got to hear Sands' single. Test-pressings were sent out on Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller's Blue Cat label. One arrived at Chicago's Chess Records, where singer Jackie Ross was in the studio, working on a follow-up to her 1964 hit, Selfish One.

"Some Chess promotions person heard the test pressing," explains Sands. "He knew it was about to come out, but thought he'd be a big hero and play it to Jackie Ross. They stopped the session, cut my song. Beat us to the street by about a week."

Blue Cat read the riot act to Chess, who pulled Ross's version off the market, but the damage was done.

"Some stations played my record and it was a hit wherever it

©Artie Wayne, Getty Images, courtesy of Evie Sands (3)

was played," says Sands, "but a lot of the other stations were so upset with the mix-up they refused to play it."

The effect was lasting. Despite an intense promotional circuit, and a series of glorious live TV performances, Sands' Blue Cat follow-up, I Can't Let Go, was also boycotted by radio. "Blue Cat had nothing to do with the Chess thing, but the stations were upset. That was their way of punishing them," says Sands. "That doomed my version. It sucked. It wasn't fun."

AFTER SANDS' TROUBLES WITH BLUE Cat she moved to Cameo-Parkway and cut another Chip Taylor number, Angel Of The Morning. Her version possesses a melancholy and wisdom beyond her teenage years but, again, few heard it. Soon after its release, Cameo-Parkway went bust, stymying distribution. Angel Of The Morning was still a big hit, but for Merrilee Rush, who earned a 1968 Grammy nomination for Best Female Vocal. "It was disheartening," Sands says. "Allen Klein ended up with all the Cameo masters and the contracts. But it's that old zen story: you learn, you put it down, you let it go, you move on."

After Cameo-Parkway's collapse, Sands moved to A&M. "That was like when the black-and-white house lands in The Wizard Of Oz and the door opens and it's just colour and magic," she says. "But for reasons we don't have to go into, Al and Chip's songs for me kept getting covered by other people, so with the next single they said, 'If we do a song that's already been out, no one will try to steal it.'"

That next single, a reworked version of Any Way That You Want Me that Taylor had written for The Troggs, became Sands' first chart hit and the title track of her debut LP.

A showcase for Gorgoni and Taylor's melancholy orch-pop and Sands' deep, muscular soul voice, *Any Way That You Want Me* is one of the most gorgeous albums of the '70s, a rich, euphoric mix of folk, country, soul and gospel that sounds like the start of a beautiful friendship. In fact, it was the end of one. Sands moved to Los Angeles while Taylor and Gorgoni remained in New York. Moreover, Sands had started writing her own songs and, after years of watching engineers in the studio, was itching to produce. She walked away from a deal with Buddah, when they refused to give her creative control, but the pattern continued. "I call it 'The Clive Davis Approach'," she says. "You know, 'We'll pick the songs, we'll pick the producer…' Just wrong."

Luckily, Sands met up with ABC-Dunhill songwriting team, Dennis Lambert and Brian Potter, who gave Sands the freedom to work on a collection of her own songs and arrangements, 1974's joyous disco-country-soul hybrid *Estate Of Mind*.

"I'd broken that glass ceiling," says Sands, "an album of my own songs. But I was ready to produce my own stuff and when it came to being an engineer or producer, heaven forbid."

For her third LP, *Suspended Animation*, Sands chose her friend, producer Michael Stewart, as the Trojan horse.

"We'd have meetings with RCA suits. People would greet me and then, for the entire conversation, everything was addressed to Michael. Because clearly he was in charge, right?"

Written with Elvis Presley's number one songwriter Ben Weisman, and Sands' future husband Richard Germinaro, and recorded with the band Toto, with Dusty Springfield on backing vocals, *Suspended Animation* should have sealed Sands' reputation, but an RCA regime change meant promotion was pulled and, again, Sands was left out in the cold.

"I've seen it written that I retired at that point," says Sands. "I never retired but it totally hit the fan as far as recording opportunities. I was writing for Gladys Knight, Dusty Springfield, Karen Carpenter… but the offers were still, 'We'll pick your songs and producer.' I refused to be caught up in those 'isms: ageism, sexism. It was like a date that isn't right. I just said, Check please!"

Songwriting and sessions continued but, in the live arena, Sands struggled to perform her songs the way she heard them in her head.

"I've never been a straight three-chord singer-songwriter," she explains. "I wanted to present them the right way, with all the colours I wanted. Maybe that was my obstacle."

YEARS PASSED. LUCKILY, she avoided the pitfalls of many an '80s LA musician, as she was never one to over-indulge. "I was the bank," laughs Sands. "If friends of mine had weed they'd say, 'Hold this baby,' because they knew I wouldn't touch it."

Then, in 1996, Sands went to see Chip Taylor perform at an LA club comeback gig. He invited Evie up on-stage and confirmed what she'd come to doubt herself, that she could just go out and perform with voice and guitar: "He said, 'Just play. See what happens.' That reopened something."

Back with Chip and Al, the trio holed up in a hotel room and wrote nine songs in three days for Sands' comeback LP, the stripped-down, heartfelt *Women In Prison*. It was the start of her slow renaissance. In the noughties she performed with younger fans such as Pete 'Sonic Boom' Kember, The BMX Bandits, Teenage Fanclub's Norman Blake and Belle & Sebastian, and this year she's released a new six-song EP, Shine For Me, on her own label, R-Spot, where she sounds as powerful and full-voiced as she ever has. A tour is planned, including a gig at MOJO-endorsed roots festival The Ponderosa Stomp, in October, and she now has the masters for *Suspended Animation* which she's hoping to reissue on R-Spot.

"I couldn't be happier," says Sands. "I'm in charge of my own voice, my own destiny again. There's nobody to shoot it down any more." Ⓜ

*Evie Sands' Shine For Me EP is out now on R-Spot Records. Research thanks to shindig-magazine.com*

## YOU NEED SANDS

**Evie's four studio long-players, rated and assessed by ANDREW MALE.**

### ANY WAY THAT YOU WANT ME

★★★★

*(A&M, 1970)*

This collaboration between Sands, arranger Trade Martin and the producer/songwriter team of Chip Taylor and Al Gorgoni, might be one of the loveliest records of the '70s, a dreamlike consolidation of Sands' '60s NYC soul-pop roots and the mellow West Coast country-folk groove of the new decade.

### ESTATE OF MIND

★★★★

*(Haven/Capitol, 1974)*

One of the great lost albums of the '70s. A blissed-out blend of AOR soul, slow-dance disco, and sunset blues that, in songs like Music Man and Yesterday Can't Hurt Me, perfectly captures the melancholy lucidity of the rootless dream life in mid-'70s Hollywood.

### SUSPENDED ANIMATION

★★★

*(RCA/Victor, 1979)*

Effectively self-produced by Sands, this is a more stripped-back affair than *Estate Of Mind*, with Sands' late-night LA street-soul drenched in Bob James-style jazz arrangements anchored by the soul/funk rhythm section of James Gadson (drums) and Reggie McBride (bass).

### WOMEN IN PRISON

★★★★

*(Train Wreck, 1999)*

Don't call it a comeback, but Sands' return to the recording studio with Taylor and Gorgoni is something of a revelation. Her voice is sweet, soulful and seductive as ever, while the songs, based on Sands' own raw guitar-playing, are tough-talking country-folk feminist mission-statements.

# ENERGY FLASH

The death of **OTIS REDDING** in December 1967 was the crushing end to a year in which The King Of Soul had grown his empire and evolved his style onto a higher plane. Music, and the Stax label specifically, reeled and still reels from the loss of his galvanising spirit. "He would be the driving force," his bandmates tell **GEOFF BROWN**, 50 years on. "He'd be, 'C'mon, guys, let's go! Let's go!'"

Portrait by **ELAINE MAYES**

**Saturday night, Sunday morning: Otis Redding tops the bill at, Monterey, June 1967.**

# 1967

WAS SHAPING UP TO BE A MOMENTOUS, CAREER-DEFINING year for Otis Redding. After five years of hard work since the release of his Stax debut single, consolidation in the top echelon of soul music, alongside James Brown and the Motown roster, was at hand. Despite the absence of a Number 1 R&B hit, breakthrough into the US pop Top 20 beckoned after five US Top 40 pop singles and the unarguable statement of 1965's classic soul album *Otis Blue*, recorded in 24 febrile weekend hours on July 9-10 in Stax's studio at 926 East McLemore Avenue in Memphis. In the UK, that album reached Number 6, and My Girl, its UK-only single, sped to Number 1 at the end of '65, reinvesting Smokey Robinson's song, rendered dreamily by The Temptations, with gritty new life.

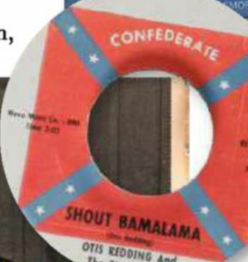
OTIS BLUE/OTIS REDDING SINGS SOUL
COLUMBIA TOWNSHIP AUDITORIUM
Columbia, South Carolina
MONDAY AUGUST 2nd 1965
Advance Tickets $2.50
At Door $3.00
SUMMER PARADE of STARS
All in Person
JOE TEX
"A woman can change a man" "One monkey don't stop no show"
OTIS REDDING
"I've been loving you too long to stop now" "Mr. Pitiful"
Billy STEWART
GLADYS KNIGHT and The PIPS
The OVATIONS
Carol FRAN
William BELL
Jimmy TIG and The Rounders
OTIS REDDING SHOW ORCH.
KIDD ANN WALL SPEEDO SIMMS
ATLANTIC
A
45 RPM
AT.4050
MY GIRL
OTIS REDDING
VOLT

*Otis Blue* had pulled together the best of Redding's style, fortified by Stax's peerless house band, Booker T. And The M.G.'s (Booker T. Jones on keys; drummer Al Jackson Jr; guitarist Steve Cropper; bassist Donald 'Duck' Dunn) plus the Mar-Keys horns and Isaac Hayes on additional keys. Together, they had delivered energetic reinventions of B.B. King's blues (Rock Me Baby) and Solomon Burke's gospel soul (Down In The Valley), plus three tributes to his hero Sam Cooke, murdered months before the album was recorded. A Change Is Gonna Come was musclier than Cooke's version, Wonderful World earthier, while Shake, a tom-tom/snare cannonade, became a live set-opener of volcanic power. His shuddering version of Jagger & Richards' (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction, taken from British artists who'd based their style on the blues, stayed in his live show for the rest of his life.

Cover versions weren't the only *Otis Blue* standouts. I've Been Loving You Too Long was a heartfelt outpouring of constancy, while Respect, a demand for domestic reward with potential for political interpretation, was sensationally remade on Aretha Franklin's first Atlantic album, *I Never Loved A Man The Way I Love You*, in early '67. Side one, track one, Aretha's version made Respect her own: a proud, defiant, ecstatic anthem. "That girl has taken it from me," Otis told Franklin's producer Jerry Wexler. Yet the appropriation was a measure of Redding's ascendant star.

It was a long way from backwoods Dawson, Georgia, where Redding was born in 1941, though work soon took his family 100-odd miles north to the more metropolitan Macon, home to the father of rock'n'roll Little Richard and the Godfather Of Soul James Brown. Young Otis sang in church and was a lively child. "Our household was quiet until he arrived," older sister Louise told Jonathan Gould in the recent Otis Redding: An Unfinished Life. "Whenever he came on the scene, he just took over… and when he went outside, you could hear him miles away."

Raw enthusiasm drove Otis on. Gospel led to blues and R&B, and to DJ Hamp Swain's Teenage Party talent contest. He won it for weeks on end until he was barred from entering. But there he'd met a guitarist, Johnny Jenkins, whose bands opened doors to better gigs. One was at the Lakeside Park centre where in 1959 Otis met Phil Walden, a white student keen for a career in the music industry. The Teenage Party also gave Otis his first sight of his future wife, Zelma, who like him lived in Macon's Tindall Heights projects.

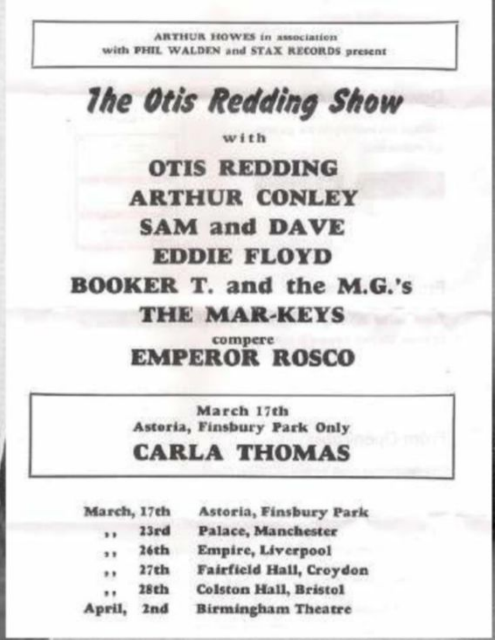

CONFEDERATE
SHOUT BAMALAMA
OTIS REDDING And The Pinetoppers

OTIS REDDING
RESPECT
THESE ARMS OF MINE
stax

Otis followed James Brown's early path as a surrogate Little Richard, even recorded a Richard knock-off, Shout Bamalama, for the Confederate label. Trying his luck in Los Angeles, he'd returned to GA chastened, hooking up again with Jenkins. When the latter's Atlantic recording date at Jim Stewart's young Stax label stalled, Redding grabbed the last minutes of the session and recorded his own ballad, These Arms Of Mine. In 1962, at the age of 20, his career had begun in earnest.

From the start, his work with Stax house band Booker T. And The M.G.'s and the Memphis Horns wrote the Southern soul template. Prominent was an absence of backing vocals, replaced by brass and reeds. "When he was in the studio he'd be stompin' around," the late Mar-Keys/Memphis Horns trumpeter Wayne Jackson told me

Courtesy of Alan Walden, Alamy, Getty Images (2)



ARTHUR HOWES in association
with PHIL WALDEN and STAX RECORDS present

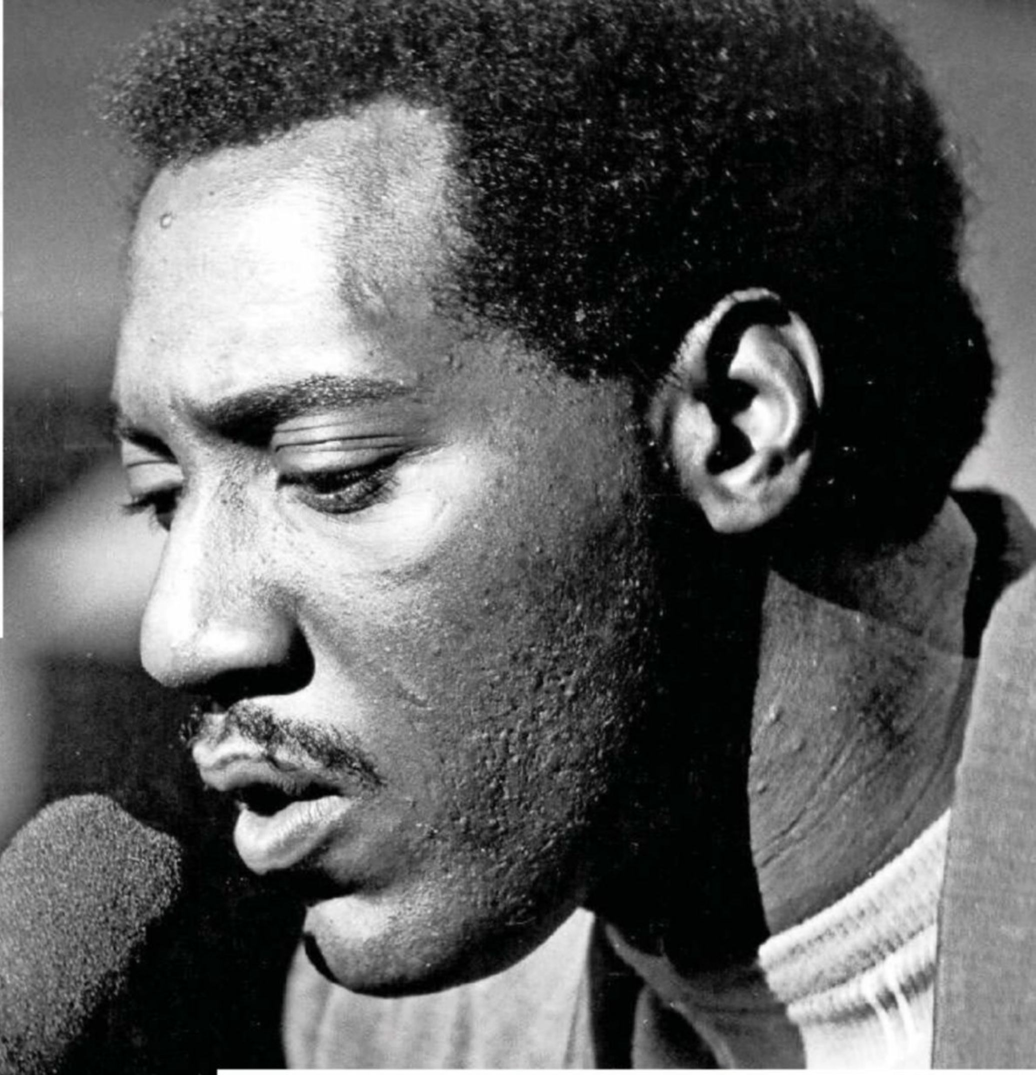
**The Otis Redding Show**

with

OTIS REDDING
ARTHUR CONLEY
SAM and DAVE
EDDIE FLOYD
BOOKER T. and the M.G.'s
THE MAR-KEYS
compere
EMPEROR ROSCO

March 17th
Astoria, Finsbury Park Only
CARLA THOMAS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| March, | 17th | Astoria, Finsbury Park |
| ,, | 23rd | Palace, Manchester |
| ,, | 26th | Empire, Liverpool |
| ,, | 27th | Fairfield Hall, Croydon |
| ,, | 28th | Colston Hall, Bristol |
| April, | 2nd | Birmingham Theatre |



**One and only man: Otis on Ready Steady Go!, 1966; (left) in London with Carla Thomas and Booker T., 1967; (below right) the Stax studio A-Team, 1967 with (from left) Isaac Hayes, David Porter, Sam Moore, Wayne Jackson (back to camera), Duck Dunn (at rear), Dave Prater, Steve Cropper, Booker T.; (opposite, bottom left, from left) Jimmy Hughes, Alan and Phil Walden, Johnnie Taylor with Otis seated; (insets) billtopper and hit maker.**

> **"IT WAS A SHOCK AND A TREMENDOUS LOSS. OTIS WAS THIS STRONG LIFE FORCE THAT WARMED SO MANY PEOPLE."**
>
> **ISAAC HAYES**

in 1996, "and when he'd hear a horn part he'd come stompin' over and sing it – 'Fa-fa-fa-fa' – right in your face.

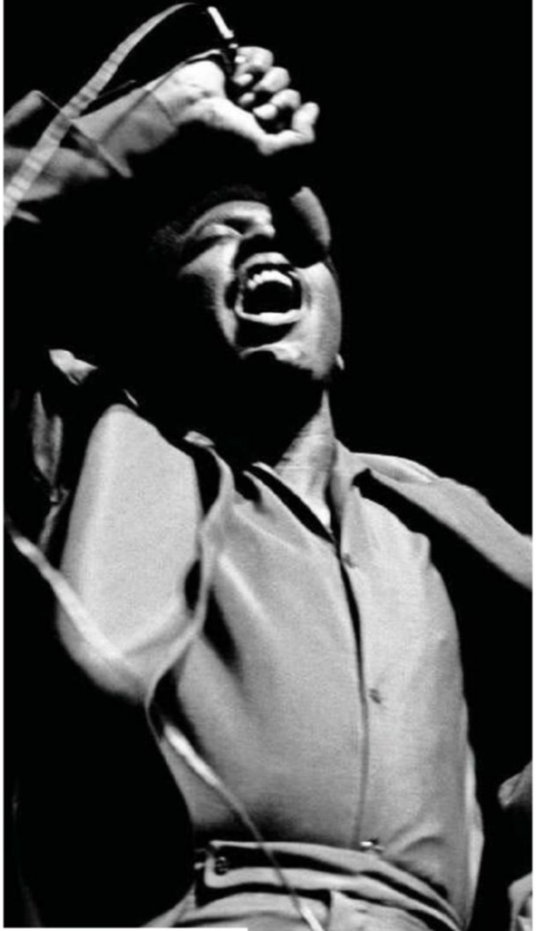
"Otis didn't know any music outside of what he could hum you," Jackson continued. "He played barre chords on guitar with his index finger, tuned to an open E, he couldn't even make a C chord [at first]. He would really just thump his guitar, sing his words, hum the horn lines, pat out a drum thing, he was really intuitive, just born that way."

BY THE SPRING OF 1967, REDDING'S ROUGH-HEWN style was internationally recognised. Chart success across the pond and a previous, September '66 visit to the UK was followed on Friday, March 17, 1967, with the release of a cover of The Beatles' Day Tripper, and the first date of a European tour by a Stax-Volt package, Redding topping a bill at London's Finsbury Park Astoria that included Sam And Dave, Booker T. And The M.G.'s, The Mar-Keys, Eddie Floyd, Carla Thomas and a young singer called Arthur Conley. (Conley was signed to Otis's Jotis label, part of his plan to build a business empire using the models of Sam Cooke, Ray Charles and James Brown.) For the musicians experiencing an alien pop music culture for the first time, the tour was a revelation.

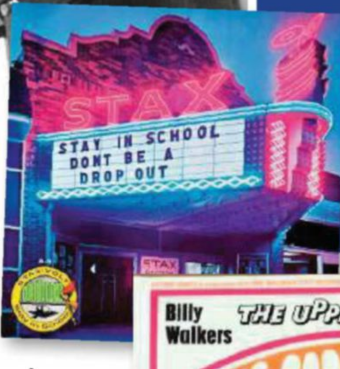
"The first shock I had was of talking with people," Booker T. Jones said, "The fans were people who'd gone to a lot of effort to hear the music. That was pretty unusual for 1967."

"The Beatles sent limos to pick us up from the airport," Wayne Jackson recalled. "We went from session musicians making a hundred, two hundred dollars a week to screaming, superstar treatment. Otis could have kept going back with his band he was such a phenomenon."

After two ecstatically received shows at Finsbury Park that Friday night, the package performed at the Upper Cut Club in Forest Gate, and crossed the Channel to play the Paris Olympia on March 22. More dates around Britain followed, then shows in Copen- ➢



**Shake! Otis at the Paris Olympia, March 22, 1967; (below) Carla and Otis present a plaque to Tennessee Senator Howard H. Baker; the Stay In School promotion; the Stax-Volt '67 tour in London; (opposite) *King & Queen*.**


STAX
STAY IN SCHOOL
DONT BE A
DROP OUT

# "I DON'T REMEMBER WHO WE FOLLOWED AT MONTEREY. IT DIDN'T MATTER. WHEN OTIS WENT ON STAGE IT WAS ALL OVER."

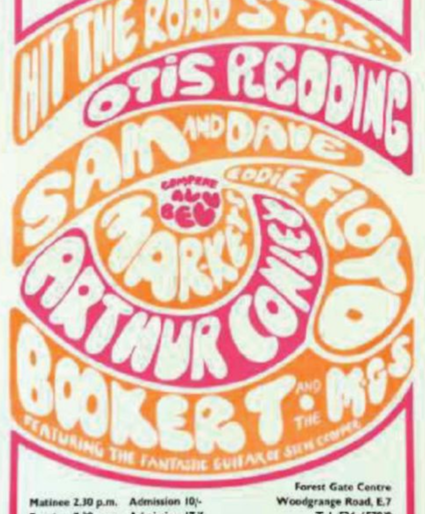
**WAYNE JACKSON**

< hagen, Stockholm and Oslo before ending at the Hammersmith Odeon on April 8. "When we played the Odeon, Hammersmith, I couldn't believe how many people were there!" Booker T. said. "And they seemed kind of expectant and unsure of what was gonna happen. [Otis was] dynamic on stage. If he were to walk into this room now, not so dynamic. The stage changes people. It changed the personality of our entire group when we got here."

"The only downside was when the police came out during the Liverpool show, and stopped it," M.G.'s guitarist Steve Cropper told me. "We went, What?! They said, 'You've got to give us time to clear the balcony.' They thought the balcony was gonna fall down with all the kids [going crazy] on it during Sam And Dave. So they said, 'Well you guys can keep playing but those guys [meaning Sam And Dave], they can't perform.' But that's their show! That's what they do! 'Cos if Sam And Dave can't dance… well, Sam is a singer, Dave wasn't really a singer, he was a dancer. But that was just funny, they stopped the show."

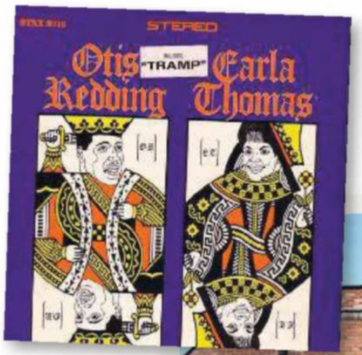
Otis told Jim Delehant of Hit Parader magazine that he "loved England from head to toe". The weather, oddly enough, appealed to him, as did the people. "So groovy. They treated me like a somebody." If he ever left the United States he'd live in England. But, he added, he'd never leave his Big O Ranch outside Macon, Georgia.

While Otis was in Britain, Stax released a lukewarm single, I Love You More Than Words Can Say/Let Me Come On Home, an uninspiring Number 30 US R&B hit. But there was much better to come. Since the start of 1967


Billy Walkers
THE UPPER CUT
Saturday March 18th
HIT THE ROAD STAX:
OTIS REDDING
SAM AND DAVE
EDDIE FLOYD
COMPERE ALAN BEV
THE MARKEYS
ARTHUR CONLEY
BOOKER T. AND THE M.G.S
FEATURING THE FANTASTIC GUITAR OF STEVE CROPPER
Forest Gate Centre
Woodgrange Road, E.7
Matinee 2.30 p.m.
Admission 10/-

Getty Images (4)

he'd been recording tracks for an album of duets with Carla Thomas, Stax's very first pop hitmaker with 1961's Gee Whiz (Look At His Eyes). The keynote track was a warm, teasing, knockabout performance of Lowell Fulsom's Tramp, with Thomas reeling off long-standing grievances about the no-good Georgia country boy who's got no dress sense, needs a haircut, is lazy and ain't got no money. "You're straight from the Georgia woods," she sneers. "That's good!" Otis returns, almost laughing, relishing his roots.



As a single, Tramp reached 26 on the US pop lists, followed three months later by the pair's remake of Eddie Floyd's R&B Number 1, Knock On Wood, also a Top 30 hit, all of which boosted their duets album *King & Queen*. It was Otis's biggest US pop hit LP during his lifetime, reaching Number 36. Its sleevenote carried the signature of Republican Tennessee senator Howard H. Baker. He would not be the only politician that year to pen a Stax note.

Those viewing popular music as an increasingly galvanising youth "movement" could point to parallel developments among white and black artists. James Brown had begun addressing social issues in 1966 with the single Don't Be A Dropout; for his part, Redding co-starred on Stax's 1967 *Stay In School* album, also featuring William Bell, Eddie Floyd, Sam And Dave and Booker T. And The M.G.'s on pro-learning songs, discussion and messages. Democrat Vice President Hubert Humphrey wrote a sleevenote with the concise slogan, "Those who learn more, earn more." Around that time, in a bid to enhance black artists' influence in the business, Otis discussed a loose union of soul singers with James Brown, Solomon Burke, Don Covay, Joe Tex, and Ben E. King which, in 1967, evolved into the first Soul Clan project [see MOJO 281]. But the strongest statement of pop's new version of the Great Society, and Redding's potential place in it, was yet to come.

THAT MAY, ROLLING STONES MANAGER ANDREW LOOG Oldham, staying in LA with label owner/impresario Lou Adler, phoned Phil Walden with an offer. Bearing in mind the successes of Walden's client Otis Redding at white rock venues like the Fillmore and the Whisky A Go Go during 1966, would he be willing to appear, for free, topping the bill on the Saturday night at a proposed international pop festival in June in Monterey, California? It aimed to rival the Newport jazz, blues and folk gatherings and give the nascent pop scene comparable recognition as an art form. As soon as Jim Stewart agreed to let Stax's studio A-team, Booker T. And The M.G.'s and The Mar-Keys – so crucial to the triumph of Redding's European tour – back the singer at Monterey, Walden accepted.

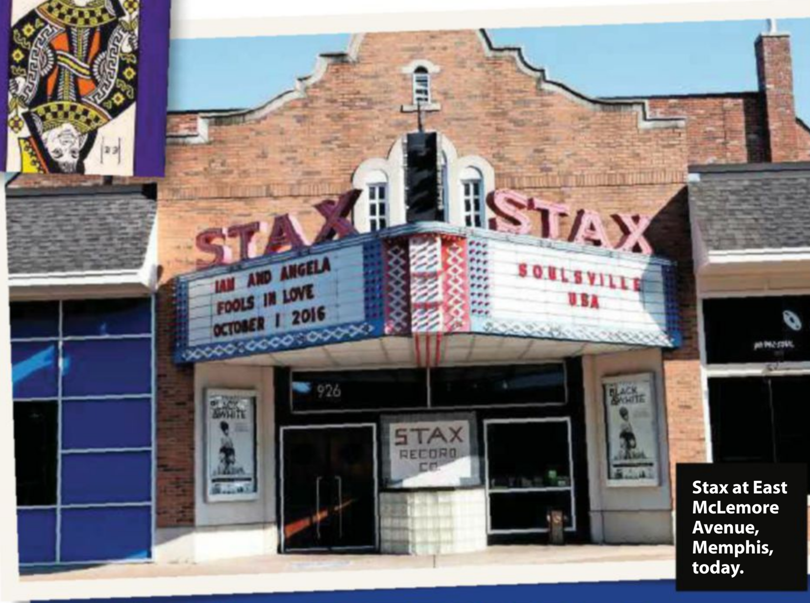
Here, his manager hoped, Redding's electrifying on-stage energy would reach its largest audience yet. Due to over-running performances by Hugh Masekela, The Byrds, Laura Nyro and Jefferson Airplane before him, his set didn't start until well into early Sunday morning, but Otis soon woke everyone up. Warmed up by a tight Booker T. And The M.G.'s and the Wayne Jackson/Andrew Love Mar-Keys horn section on a mighty Philly Dog, Otis's ferociously focused five-song set kicked off with a typically vigorous Shake, and in 20 brief minutes, after Respect, I've Been Loving You Too Long, Satisfaction, and Try A Little Tenderness, Redding had utterly stolen the night.

"I don't even remember who we followed at Monterey," Wayne Jackson told me. "It didn't matter. When Otis went on stage it was all over. Whoever opened for us were finished. Otis took it over."

"On [that] stage was just one of those times when you could feel all the energy and electricity," Booker T. Jones remembers. "I think we did one of our best shows, Otis and the M.G.'s. That we were included in that was also something of a phenomenon. That we were there? With those people? They were accepting us and that was one of the things that really moved Otis. He was happy to be included and it brought him a new audience.

"Monterey was almost not like the States," Jones adds. "It was California and, yes, it was quite different… the hippy movement was in force and… they welcomed us, that was a completely different experience. Disregarding the concert, I was shocked and amazed when we pulled into the town, everything had changed from the conventional American city. Restaurants were giving away free food, the police were nowhere to be found. It was an atmosphere I had never experienced before. Hell's Angels were escorting us to the concert, it was a flip-flop."

Soon after Monterey, Otis headed out on a long summer tour – 48 dates in 53 days – flying in a newly-acquired Cessna light aircraft. At its end, tired after the relentless schedule of recording and gigging, the singer took a week's break on a houseboat in Sausalito, gazing across San Francisco Bay, the perfect time and setting for reflection. But he was soon back producing tracks at ➤



Stax at East McLemore Avenue, Memphis, today.

# SOUL REVIVAL

Stax, the Memphis label where Otis found fame, has risen again. "At least there will be something here that says *we were here*," **WILLIAM BELL** tells **GEOFF BROWN**.

IN 1996, when this writer visited the site at 926 East McLemore Avenue where Stax's studio once stood, 20 years had passed since the company was declared bankrupt. In 1981 main creditors Union Planters National Bank sold the land to the Church Of God In Christ for $10. In 1989 the church started demolishing the site, and by '96 it was a grim corner plot, the buildings razed to the ground. My guide that day, Memphis Horns trumpeter Wayne Jackson, didn't want to loiter there as dusk fell.

Fast forward and today the site is unrecognisable, the studios rebuilt, now home to a combined tourist attraction and centre for education, the façade identical to the old studio but seeming brighter than Jim Stewart and Estelle Axton – the original "St" and "Ax" of Stax – could ever have imagined.

"When they first tore the building down it was really painful to pass that corner," William Bell told me, "because we spent a lot of hours and days and nights there. Then, of course, we had the bright idea we was gonna resurrect it."

It was not a straightforward process. "Me and Rufus [Thomas], Deanie [Parker, songwriter, artist, PR], Isaac [Hayes] and David [Porter] and some others, we started to talk about how we was gonna try to play some concerts to raise monies. So we were saying, Let's see if we can buy this lot back.

"We were fortunate enough to find the original blueprints, so the old marquee is the same, so we've been having some tremendous luck and some benefactors and people helping us. And they built it back to spec."

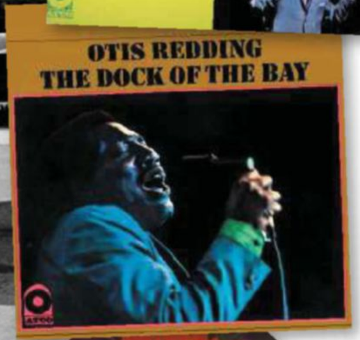
The official reopening came in the summer of 2000 when the Stax Music Academy opened its doors. The Stax Museum Of American Soul Music followed in 2003 and two years later the Soulsville Charter School. "After the ground breaking and everything, to walk back in that building the first day it opened it was like déjà vu, because it was just like a brand new building but better. It was *wow*. It was really a happy elated feeling that at least there will be something here that says *we were here*."

"WHEN THEY FIRST TORE THE BUILDING DOWN IT WAS REALLY PAINFUL TO PASS THAT CORNER."
WILLIAM BELL

And the Stax label, reactivated via the Concord Music Group, has again been home to some familiar names: notably Bell's excellent 2016 release *This Is Where I Live*, which won the Americana Album Of The Year Grammy earlier this year, Booker T.'s *Sound The Alarm* (2013), Eddie Floyd's *Eddie Loves You So* (2008) and two Steve Cropper LPs with Felix Cavaliere, *Nudge It Up A Notch* (2008) and *Midnight Flyer* (2010). Once dubbed "the little label that could", Stax can again.

The Bar-Kays: (from left) Jimmy King, Ronnie Caldwell, Carl Cunningham, Phalon Jones, Ben Cauley, James Alexander; (below) Otis and his ill-fated Beechcraft 18; (insets) productions and posthumous hits.

ARTHUR CONLEY
SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL



VOLT
THE DOCK OF THE BAY
OTIS REDDING

> **"I'VE ALWAYS SAID THAT SONGS ARE ACCIDENTS. AND DOCK OF THE BAY WAS AN ACCIDENT."**
>
> **STEVE CROPPER**

< Muscle Shoals for Arthur Conley's second Atlantic album, *Shake, Rattle & Roll*. Then, in October, off to New York for a week headlining the Harlem Apollo. But the check arrived for those years of strenuous work and vocal strain. He needed an urgent operation to remove throat polyps. The Apollo dates were cancelled, and after a successful procedure at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital he returned to Zelma and the children at the Big O Ranch, unable to utter a word for a fortnight, with plenty of time to a) grow a beard and b) fret about what might remain of his vocal power when he got to sing, growl, grunt and roar again.

He needn't have worried. When recording started that November, Otis soon had enough material for an album including a poem, written in his absence by Zelma that became Dreams To Remember, and a song inspired by his brief sojourn in Sausalito, (Sittin' On) The Dock Of The Bay. Both were easeful, reflective and sung with restraint heralding a new, gentler style. Phil Walden and Jim Stewart had reservations about Dock Of The Bay and Otis's approach. But not M.G.'s guitarist Steve Cropper, its co-composer.

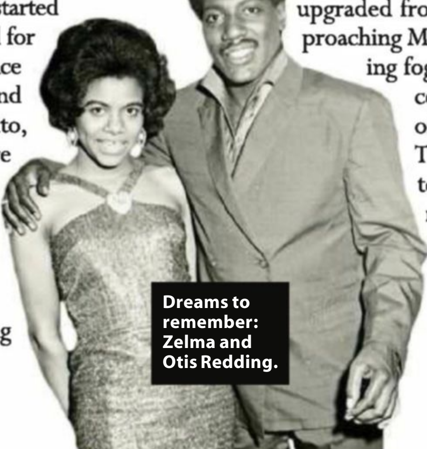
"I know in my own mind it was the best thing we ever did with him," Cropper told me during a break in rehearsals for September's 'Soul Prom' at the Royal Albert Hall. "He and I both knew… I've always said that songs are accidents, and they really are. And that one was an accident, but I heard it immediately I helped him finish it. It lay in the can for about two weeks and what we said was, 'This is great but it needs some embellishment.' I said, Well, after you leave I'm going to be doing The Staple Singers and I guarantee I can get them to sing on this. And he said, 'Great!' That's what we were waiting on."

DOCK OF THE BAY WRAPPED UP the three-week recording binge which had proved that Redding's voice was fully recovered. He and young road band The Bar-Kays got ready for another weekend of dates on December 8-10 in Nashville, Cleveland, and Madison, Wisconsin – it was business as usual.

"I can recall that last trip that he made," the late Isaac Hayes told me. "We was all hanging out in the lobby, not the studio, and his pilot Dick [Fraser] said to me, 'Man, why don't y'all come go with us.' They wanted me and David [Porter, co-writer/producer] to go with them. And we were going but Sam And Dave were in town for a concert so we said, No, we can't go, man, 'cos Sam And Dave are here and we got to go see 'em, 'cos they're our artists and we got to be supportive."

Trumpeter Ben Cauley had lately joined The Bar-Kays. "I'd been in the studio cutting with the Memphis Horns. Then I went out on the road with Otis. He was a groovy cat, like an older brother. He looked after us all," Cauley told me in 1996. The Bar-Kays, who'd been in the Memphis area since 1966, were still in their teens, but a lot was expected of them as a Stax band for the future. "We were very close together and it showed on-stage," said Cauley, who died in 2015. "Very tight. [Otis] was very spontaneous but we didn't change too much from how the songs had been recorded. But he got a really good groove, kept us together."

After the Nashville and Cleveland dates, Otis's light aircraft, upgraded from a Cessna to a Beechcraft Model 18, was approaching Madison Municipal Airport in low cloud and freezing fog when, at 3.28 on the afternoon of Sunday, December 10, 1967, it nosed down into the icy waters of Lake Monona a few miles short of the runway. The plane hit the lake with tremendous force, scattering debris. "It's not really hard to talk about now," Cauley said, haltingly. "At first it was. I really… we had just woke up. The airplane started shakin' and I can remember the sax player [Phalon Jones] was sittin' in front of me and he said, 'What's that?!' and then, 'Oh no!'"



Dreams to remember: Zelma and Otis Redding.

©Otis Redding Foundation (2), Getty Images, Alamy

On impact, Cauley was flung out of the plane, still in his seat. As he couldn't swim, he held on to a cushion and floated while, all around him, his friends drowned. Cauley was the only survivor. Bar-Kays bassist James Alexander was not on the flight, but guitarist Jimmy King, keyboard player Ronnie Caldwell, saxophonist Jones, drummer Carl Cunningham, their valet/friend Matthew Kelly and pilot Fraser all perished with Redding. Divers were still searching the bottom of the lake for bodies on Tuesday, December 12. Otis Redding had celebrated his 26th birthday on September 9.

"We cried," Isaac Hayes said, for everyone at Stax. "It was such a shock. Because he was a person that represented so much life. When they're gone it's like, 'What do we do?' We just sat around. Everybody came to the studio. And, of course, along with him, the loss of The Bar-Kays, too. Jimmy King, who started off with me in a band. I was like his mentor. Little Carl Cunningham was Al Jackson's protégé. It just stunned Memphis, so many lives lost at one time."

David Porter doesn't remember a Sam And Dave gig saving his life, but is agreed on the enormity of the crash's impact: "I was out of the city working on the college circuit with Booker T. And The M.G.'s when we heard. I called home and spoke to my wife. All she'd heard on the radio was there'd been a crash and some people thought it was us. But she said later they announced it was Otis. I was just numb on the plane back to Memphis. Then a little later, the funeral – well, that was a very sad experience."

Booker T. remembers it, too. "We were about to fly home. And… yes, well, we had to fly home with that knowledge."

Otis's widow Zelma agreed to postpone her husband's funeral a few days while his body lay in state at Macon's City Auditorium and fans and townsfolk paid their respects. An estimated 6,000 mourners turned out on Monday, December 18 for the funeral. "I didn't go," Hayes said. "I didn't want to remember them like that. It was a fiasco. Fans was just… James Brown had to run for his life, they were charging at the entertainers. It was just a shock and a tremendous loss. Nobody thought of it in terms of monetary losses. It was this strong life force, the energy he gave off, that warmed so many people. It was like he was our hero and he was not a pretentious person. He didn't try to be more than what he was. You know when a person starts to reach fame and fortune they try to become a bit snooty, stuff like that? He was down-to-earth. Always. And he always liked to have an idea and sometimes we worked all night. I've slept under the piano many nights, on the floor. Nobody refused to work with him. He would be the driving force. He'd be, 'C'mon, guys, let's go! Let's go!'"

The tragedy touched the entire African-American music industry and music fans at large. In his ghosted autobiography, The Godfather Of Soul, James Brown recalled a conversation days before the fatal crash, in which he cautioned Otis against learning to fly his Beech 18, and warning that the plane was not big enough to carry "all those people and all that equipment". "Somebody was fooling Otis," reckoned Brown. "That plane was an old plane, with a bad battery and a lot of service problems. It had no business flying in that kind of weather." Rumours of skulduggery flourished, centred around Otis's alleged desire to change his manager. But Brown's explanation has always seemed the likeliest.

SOON AFTER OTIS'S FUNERAL, J STEWART CALLED staff and artists into Stax on McLemore Avenue and tried to

of making records. Steve Cropper went back into the studio to review the tapes they'd recorded but knew (Sittin' On) The Dock Of e Bay was the hit-in-waiting. Remembering Redding's less than uthentic seagull imitation on one of six takes, he added a recording of real seagull cries to the track, and lapping water, emphasising the sombre, ruminative lyric of yearning for his Georgia home as he sat by that San Francisco dock, watching ships sail by, "wastin' time". Because most of his lyrics came from close observation of others' lives, of personal experience or thoughts, the couplet "I can't do what 10 people tell me to do/So I guess I'll remain the same" assumed resonance, fuelling those rumours about the state of his relationships with Phil Walden, Jim Stewart, Jerry Wexler, and others.

Dock Of The Bay became Redding's biggest hit single, Number 1 in the US, and Number 3 in the UK, where he topped the Melody Maker Readers Poll, unseating Elvis Presley, winner for the previous decade. A compilation album taking its title from the single topped the UK album charts and reached 4 in the US. But in the wake of his death, in the vacuum he left, a rot set in at Stax. "It was never the same without Otis," David Porter said. "He was such an integral part of everything it was not possible that it could be the same."

"It wasn't until then that we realised the stature he had in the family," Booker T. said. "It made us realise how important Otis had been to Stax as a person and a musical figure. He was good friend to everybody. Everybody liked him."

Despite '70s hits for Isaac Hayes, Johnnie Taylor and The Staple Singers, Stax was further weakened by financial miscalculations and the fissures caused by Martin Luther King's assassination, which undermined the racial harmony that underwrote the label's working relationships. Control passed from Jim Stewart to promotions man Al Bell, until problems with Stax's distributor, CBS, ended in 1975 with the Memphis label's bankruptcy.

"I think now that Stax Records died with Otis," said Wayne Jackson. "Stax continued, they kept making records but it got more uncomfortable as the fame of it grew and Isaac Hayes became a big star and got into the big money, the pop money. Then the gangsters started hanging around, with guns, and it didn't feel fun any more. It wasn't fun. So me and Andrew [Love] left. Booker T. left. Steve Cropper left. Duck left. The bones got up and walked. Then they had imitators, hangers-on, leeches, power struggles, big companies trying to buy something that no longer existed."

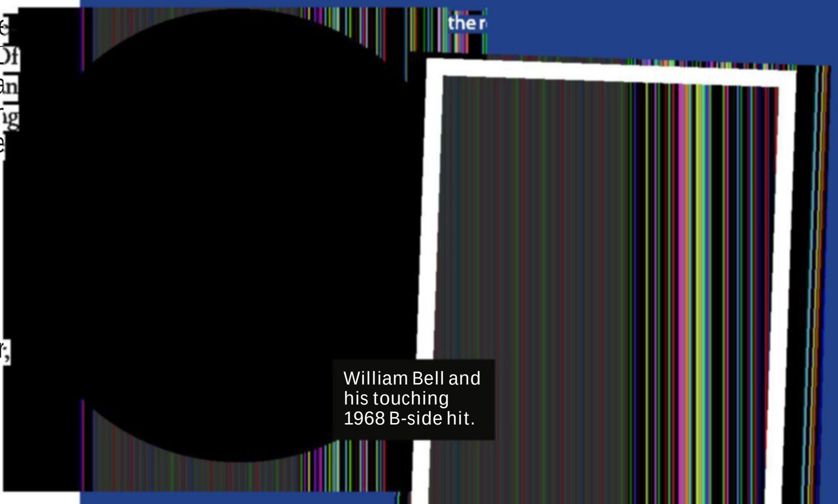
Down the years Otis Redding's reputation has remained steady, his catalogue revered, his powerful Southern soul as definitive as the styles of James Brown, Sam Cooke or Ray Charles. More poignantly, (Sittin' On ) The Dock Of The Bay represented a clear evolution, a ballad that didn't resolve like the pleading I've Been Loving You Too Long or Try A Little Tenderness's driving crescendo. He had dreams to remember, for sure, but he had dreams to fulfil too.

"If Otis had lived what would he be today?" pondered Steve Cropper. "He'd be a grandfather (*chuckles*), he'd still be the King Of Soul. And I bet he would still be performing."

## "I NEEDED CLOSURE"

### How **WILLIAM BELL**'s touching response to Otis's death – A Tribute To A King – was finally released.

"IT WAS like therapy for me. It was like cleansing, I needed closure on this idea that he's dead. I saw him on the Friday before he left [at Stax's studio] and Sunday he'd gone. I wrote it to give to [Redding's wife] Zelma and the family. I didn't have any idea to release it. Booker and I got together.
I told him, I'm gonna write this down.
I came to the studio the next day and Jim [Stewart] loved it so we had a little ole 2-track tape recorder and Jim said, 'Why don't we tape it?' I said I really don't want to put a record out – everybody was trying to come with We Love You Otis, We Miss You Otis, and I didn't want anybody to think I was trying to capitalise on his death. I told Jim, I just want to send this to Zelma. So we did. Then I get this call, 'You got to release this.' Jim wanted to release it, Estelle Axton wanted to, Zelma wanted to, and I didn't. I fought against it a while, then I said, I'll release only if you put it on my next single as the B-side. So we



William Bell and his touching 1968 B-side hit.

BERLIN BOWIE
1976-1979

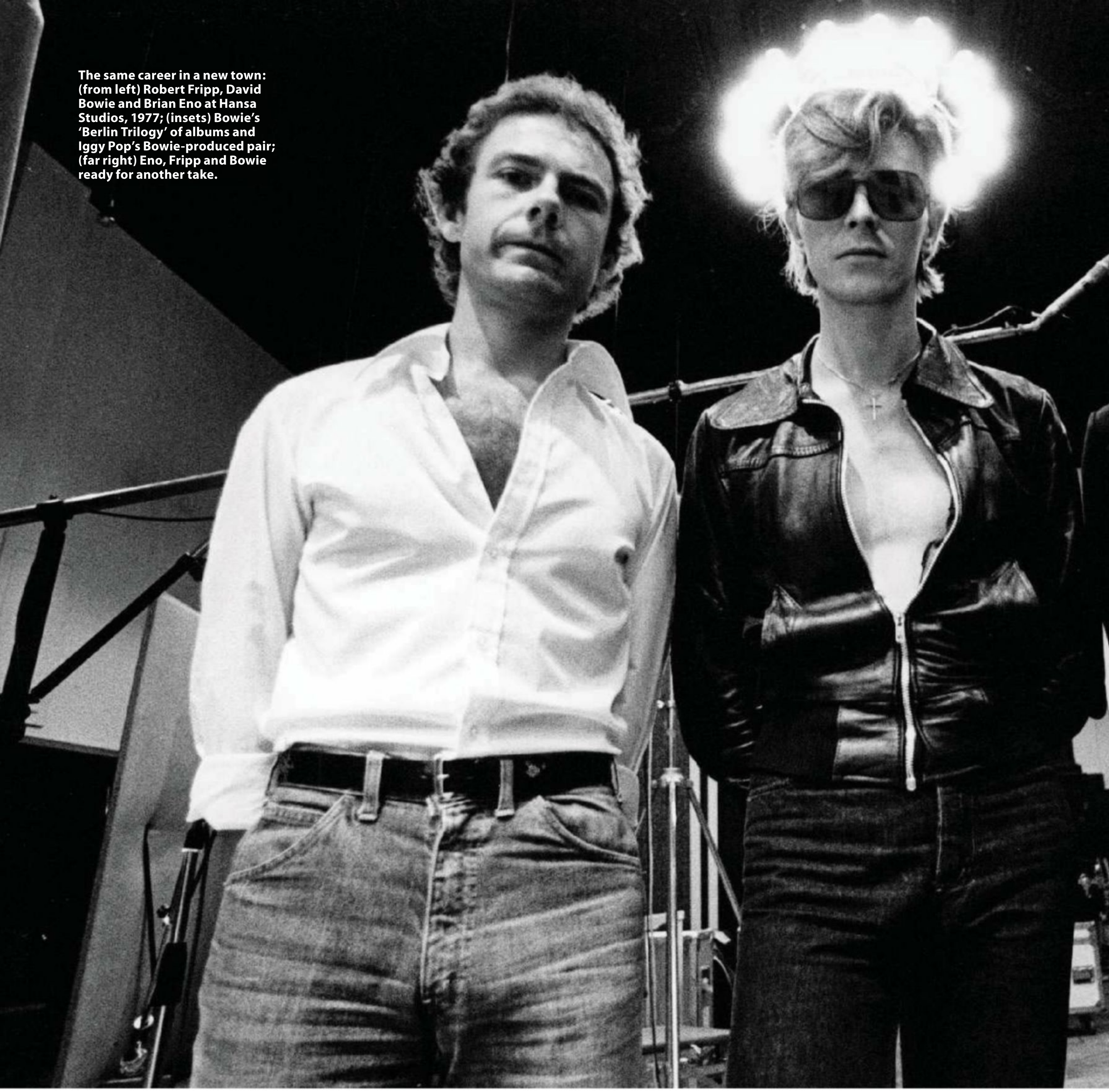
# Walls And Bridges

*A New Career In A New Town* – a new box set collecting David Bowie's 'Berlin Years' – reflects a man in the act of careful reconstruction. But as TONY VISCONTI, CARLOS ALOMAR and Hansa studio engineer EDUARD MEYER reveal, the free city offered the Starman stark reality as well as an art playground. "Sometimes you need to be by yourself with your problems," they tell MARK PAYTRESS. "Sometimes you just wanna shut up."

PLUS: The lowdown on *LODGER*, Berlin Bowie's black sheep opus – now with a revelatory remix!

Portrait by CLIVE ARROWSMITH.

Clive Arrowsmith/Camera Press



**The same career in a new town: (from left) Robert Fripp, David Bowie and Brian Eno at Hansa Studios, 1977; (insets) Bowie's 'Berlin Trilogy' of albums and Iggy Pop's Bowie-produced pair; (far right) Eno, Fripp and Bowie ready for another take.**

EARLY ONE MORNING, PROBABLY in October 1976, the doorbell rang at Eduard Meyer's apartment building, close to KaDeWe, the historic department store in the heart of West Berlin.

"It was Iggy Pop and David Bowie," recalls the now retired Hansa Studios recording engineer. "I think they'd spent the night in the park."

Meyer cooked up "a nice breakfast" then, as was his custom, invited both to sign his guest book. Iggy scrawled a slapdash "I was here", Bowie a cryptic "Could I interest you in a new Hoover?"

"That was because he'd felt like a vacuum-cleaner seller ringing someone's doorbell unannounced," Meyer explains. Bowie was amused by his new role. Freedom tasted good that Berlin morning.

"DAVID WENT TO BERLIN WITH IGGY FOR THE isolation," insists Carlos Alomar, guitarist on Iggy Pop's two Berlin albums (*The Idiot*, *Lust For Life*) and Bowie's 'Berlin Trilogy' (*Low*, *"Heroes"*, *Lodger*). "It was to humanise his condition, to say, I'd like to forget my world, go to a café, have a coffee and read the paper. They couldn't do that in America. Sometimes you need to be by yourself with your problems. Sometimes you just wanna shut up."

By 1976, Bowie especially needed to keep shtum. For years, this keen observer of politics and power, who'd sung of "bullshit faith" and the "Leper Messiah", had warned of a return of Fascism. Since 1975, his comments had grown more inflammatory and irresponsible. Provocations such as "I believe very strongly in Fascism" and "Adolf Hitler was one of the first rock stars" always make awkward headlines.

**Lust for life: Bowie and Iggy Pop detour to Moscow, 1976.**

Christian Simon Pietri ©The David Bowie Archive (2), Andrew Kent

“Berlin was a war zone with big black tanks roaming the streets. I don’t care how blasé you are - that’s disturbing.” TONY VISCONTI

DAVID BOWIE LOW
IGGY POP The Idiot
RCA
Iggy Pop Lust For Life
"HEROES" DAVID BOWIE
LODGER
DAVID BOWIE
His new album out now on RCA
RCA

The hearty German breakfast was a positive sign. Life in Los Angeles’ Hollywood Hills, his home since spring 1975, had rendered Bowie skeletal and vampiric, stupefied by a Cracked Actor’s diet of milk, red peppers, “astronomical” cocaine use and super-strong Gitanes. Immersed in Nazi propaganda films and occult literature, he awaited the apocalypse.

It was as if Bowie’s recent roles – an extra-terrestrial in The Man Who Fell To Earth, and his own disciplined, disconnected Thin White Duke touring *Station To Station* in spring 1976 – had conspired to imprison him. Either that or his Method acting was too damn good.

Down on himself and the world, Bowie scapegoated LA. “The fucking place should be wiped off the face of the Earth,” he said later. Always the stranger in a strange land, he yearned for a more conducive kind of alienation.

The catalyst for change was rekindling his friendship with Iggy Pop late in 1974, when he found the ex-Stooges frontman battling heroin addiction while confined, virtually alone, in a mental hospital. He invited ‘Jimmy’ on the spring ’76 tour, during which time they curbed their drug use and made a detour to Moscow. Bowie resolved to produce Iggy Pop’s first solo record. And they would move to Berlin. It was the heroin capital of the world and one-time centre of the Nazi universe. Smart move?

Berlin was an island city on the Cold War frontline, cut off by a concrete Wall – an actual manifestation of the Iron Curtain – that divided East from West, Communism from Capitalism. Pockmarked by bullets and misted in melancholy, its Western half had, since the late ’60s, been considered a ‘free city’, subsidised by West Germany yet functioning in accordance with its own rules.

DURING THEIR FIRST DAYS THERE, IN EARLY AUGUST ’76, Iggy grew fascinated by the old-style vending machines he’d see fixed to walls. “One of them said ‘Sand’, so I thought, Wow, a sandwich!” he once told me. “So I put my ➢

KRAFTWERK AUTOBAHN
PHILIPS

**Boys keep swinging: Dancin' David strikes the poses; (insets left) Tangerine Dream's Edgar Froese, who helped Bowie find the Hauptstrasse apartment; Kraftwerk's *Autobahn*, which the singer played for guitarist Carlos Alomar (inset opposite).**

⋞ Deutschmark in and a little door opened. It was a small bag of sand!"

It was an omen. Bowie, who'd long regarded recording tape as a canvas, was a keen believer in machines churning out the unexpected. This was his kind of place, spiritually flawed, unpredictable, prone to extremes. And, like other West German cities, Berlin would surely bring out the machine-like, rhythmic approach to sound he now demanded, guided by chance and experimentation. Just with more Bowie, more Berlin.

"David introduced us to Kraftwerk, all that crazy electronic stuff," says Carlos Alomar. "We [Alomar, bassist George Murray, drummer Dennis Davis] loved it. It wasn't verse/chorus/bridge like American music." That was just as well, because Bowie had his own spin on Krautrock. "He wanted our funk rhythm section to be the electronic component of that kind of music."

After a brief stay at the Hotel Gerhus, a decaying villa near Grunewald Forest, Bowie took a seven-room, first floor apartment at 155 Hauptstrasse, on a wide, tree-lined thoroughfare in Schöneberg, south-west Berlin. Tangerine Dream's Edgar Froese helped find the place. Bowie's PA/companion Corinne 'Coco' Schwab and Iggy joined him, each taking a room. (Both would later move out to their own apartments in the 'Hinterhof' at the back of the building.)

A fairly staid part of town (around 25 per cent of West Berliners were of pensionable age), Schöneberg – birthplace of Marlene Dietrich – nevertheless hosted a significant Turkish population, while the café next door to 155, a regular haunt, was a gateway to a wider, wilder gay scene.

"Berlin was a hipsters' city," says producer Tony Visconti, "a combination of Greenwich Village and Soho. That's because it was cheap to live there. Nobody wanted to live inside the Wall."

The city was also a haven for West Germans who wished to avoid military service, thanks to a legislative quirk. But hipster didn't necessarily mean happy. "It was basically a cordoned-off war zone with big black tanks roaming the streets," Visconti remembers. "I don't care how blasé you are – that's disturbing."

Freed from LA, yet still facing numerous management, financial

Clive Arrowsmith (12), Getty Images (2)

"It was a very sad period for David. But it's loneliness that allows you to dive back into yourself." CARLOS ALOMAR

and personal problems, Bowie seized everything that Berlin offered. "The atmosphere stimulated David," says Visconti. "He really did love it there."

The vibe got better still when, one day in August, again on Edgar Froese's advice, Bowie visited Hansa Studios in the grand Meistersaal building at 38 Köthenerstrasse. "David looked at the big hall and said, 'Wow, I must do something here'," remembers Eduard Meyer. But the room, originally a dancehall that could accommodate 120 musicians, had already been booked out. Instead, Bowie and Visconti mixed *The Idiot*, recorded at the Château D'Hérouville outside Paris earlier that summer, at Hansa Studio 1 on the original Kurfürstendamm site.

IT WAS OCTOBER BEFORE THEY COULD GET INTO THE Big Hall By The Wall, as Bowie dubbed Studio 2. With backing tracks already put down at the Château in September, vocals for side one of *Low* were recorded there, as well as Weeping Wall and Subterraneans, destined for the mostly bleak and instrumental second side.

"Hansa was at the dead end of Berlin," says Meyer. "All the streets stopped at the Wall which was across the street. The building was one of probably four in the whole Kreuzberg district that wasn't flattened by bombs from England."

As the Hansa windows were flung open for air, only the guards who stood ominously on observation towers could hear Bowie's brooding new soundscapes.

Inside the vast room, heavy velvet curtains hung everywhere absorbing the sound. Bottled beer arrived by the crate, which was swiftly emptied by Bowie and Iggy. Determined to "deform" the sound, Bowie spent much of his time with Visconti in the control room, a brisk walk away.

"Hansa was a perfect place for a bit of industrial," says Carlos Alomar, "putting your head down and work, work, work."

Funtime, too. "One evening, when we were just about to finish, three ladies appeared at the door of the control room," Meyer remembers. "David turned to Jimmy [Iggy] and said, 'Select one of these ladies. I'll take the other two!'"

Once sessions were over, rock's odd couple would often hit the town, Bowie incognito in Burberry mac and cloth cap, hair boyishly neat and naturally mousy again. It was as if he was catching up on the student way of life he missed out on first time round.

Chez Romy Haag, in Schöneberg, where the decadent spirit of late-'20s Weimar could be re-experienced, was a favoured haunt. Bowie grew close to Haag, a stunning transgender ➢

**Fantastic voyage: (left) Bowie on the Isolar II Stage tour, 1978; (below) Erich Heckel's Roquairol; (bottom left) Bowie, Tony Visconti (centre) and Eduard Meyer mix *Low*, 1976.**

**Sound and vision: (from left) Fripp, Bowie and Eno in the Hansa studio, '77; (insets right) Eno and Bowie at the desk; 45 and film.**

≺ cabaret artist and muse who he'd first met in April when the tour rolled into Berlin.

Despite what was by most accounts a colourful nightlife, Carlos Alomar cautions against an overly romantic interpretation of Bowie's exile. "It was a very sad period for David," he says. "I don't want to put it in some glamorous place. He was fighting for his marriage, his son; his business was horrible, the touring exhausting and taking every bit of money that he had. Nobody looks at the loneliness. It's loneliness that allows you to dive back into yourself and see if you can find your inner strength."

OVER CHRISTMAS 1976, EDUARD MEYER WAS INVITED to 155 Hauptstrasse for a seasonal goose. "Coco cooked it, and we ate sitting around a large wooden table," Meyer remembers. Aside from the odd mattress on the floor, he said, every room was virtually empty. Only David's, with its bed, cassette player and an artist's easel complete with unfinished canvas, was furnished, albeit partially.

Bowie's Berlin aesthetic was austere, but black humour was permissible. During a trip into the Eastern sector, Bowie visited the site of Hitler's Bunker, where he was unable to resist a furtive Nazi salute for photographer Andy Kent, who captured the moment for (private) posterity.

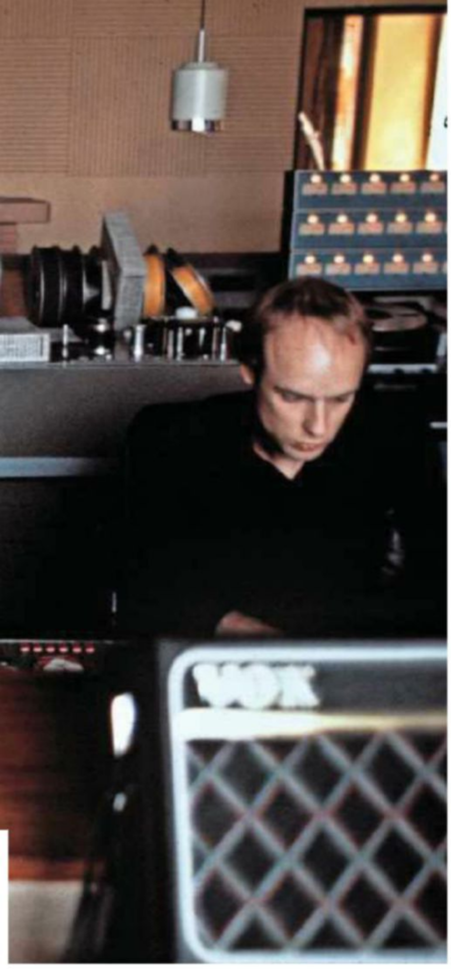
Hours were spent at the Brücke Museum near Grunewald Forest. Home to the largest collection of German Expressionist art, the Brücke was a refuge and a revelation. In the vigorous brushstrokes and often jarring colours of artists such as Kirchner, Nolde and Heckel, Bowie saw something of himself, the confrontation-seeking iconoclast. Back at 155, Bowie painted numerous canvases, the best an Expressionist-style portrait of the Japanese philosopher/artist Yukio Mishima. He hung it above his bed.

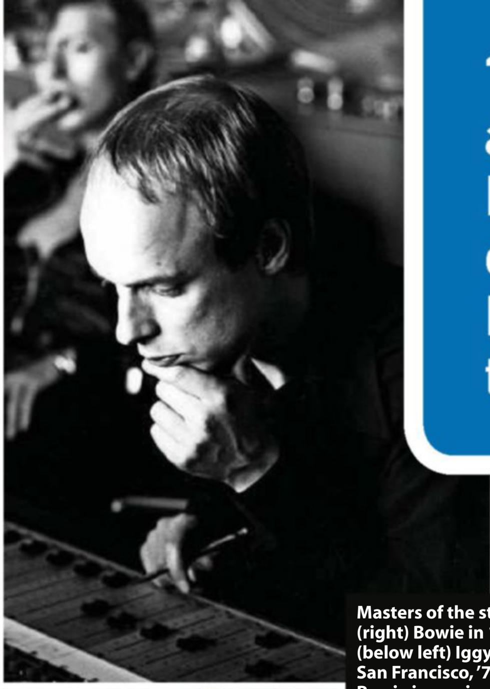
The Brücke influence was acknowledged on the cover artwork for *The Idiot* and later *"Heroes"*, both based on a 1917 work, Roquairol, by Erich Heckel. The original image was a study in madness, and its title strangely evocative of "rock'n'roll". In 1937, the painter's work was declared 'Degenerate Art' by the Nazi Party.

By early 1977, Bowie had started describing himself as "a Generalist", probably shorthand for RenaissanceManBowie. Unlike the verbose Thin White Duke, The Generalist was more circumspect. *Low* appeared in January 1977 with barely a promotional murmur. On March 1, Iggy took off on a six-week transatlantic tour to promote *The Idiot*. Bowie, flat-capped, sat modestly at the keyboard.

Returning to Berlin in April, he produced a second Iggy Pop album, *Lust For Life*, before flying in his band, Tony Visconti and

Andrew Kent (2), © Tony Visconti, Christian Simon Pietri © The David Bowie Archive (4) Getty Images, Alamy

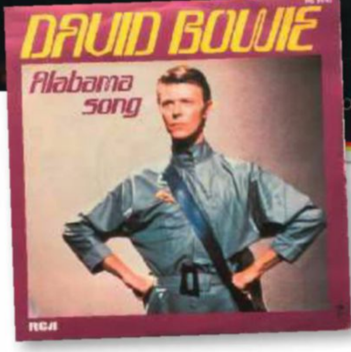




> “Three ladies appeared at the door. David said, ‘Select one of these ladies. I’ll take the other two!’” **EDUARD MEYER**

**Masters of the stage: (right) Bowie in 1976; (below left) Iggy in San Francisco, ’77, Bowie is on piano.**

David Bowie
is...
Just a Gigolo



Brian Eno, to begin work on *“Heroes”* in July.

The title track, inspired by an illicit affair between Tony Visconti and backing singer Antonia Maass (an assertion she later contested), and conducted in the shadow of the Wall, is the era’s masterpiece, an evocation of the power of Now, nothingness, fatalism, rolled out over a slow-burn wash of mesmerising Krautrock sound. Bowie’s vocal, among his very best, was poised delicately between heroic and hysterical.

“I was on a beach in Barbados for much of the *“Heroes”* sessions,” says Meyer. “But I arrived back in time to hear the first playback of the “Heroes” backing track. They all knew it was fantastic.”

The song could not be topped. After filming Just A Gigolo, early in 1978, Bowie said goodbye to Berlin and toured the world. “There was a definite change in David after Berlin,” says Carlos Alomar. “He was stronger, had some sobriety, and was far more mentally acute. Sometimes you gotta take a step back in order to move forward.”

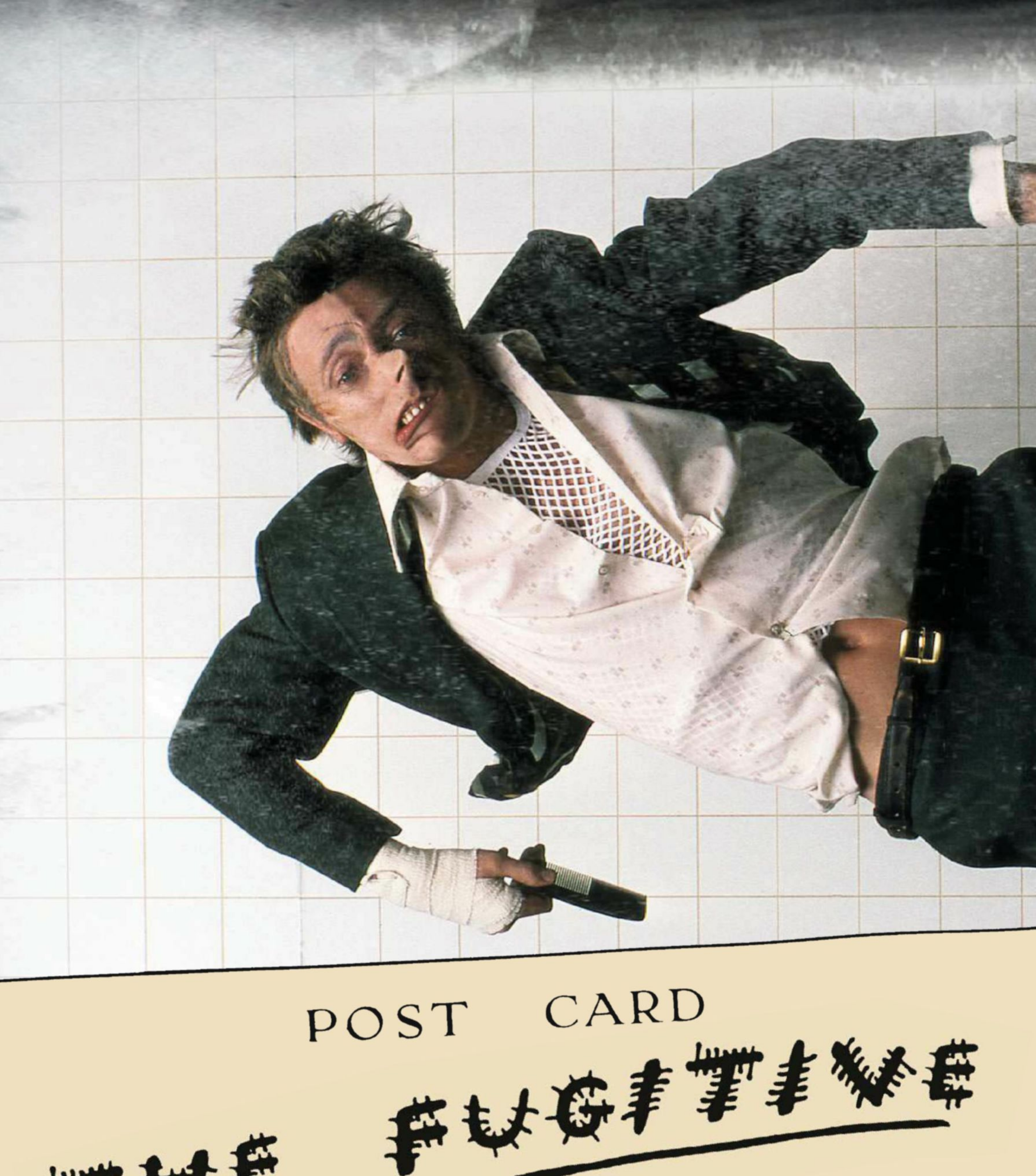
But Berlin never left Bowie. After completing the first leg of the tour, he stopped off in London to record a tub-thumping reinterpretation of Brecht/Weill’s Alabama Song. “That was twisted!” Alomar says. “David wanted it circus-like, I saw it as a German beer-drinkers’ song.”

Three years later, Bowie was back at Hansa for a day recording songs for a BBC television production of Brecht’s Baal. “He looked very healthy,” remembers Meyer, “much better than when I first saw him in 1976.” By this time, bands were beginning to turn up at Hansa hoping to emulate the ‘Bowie in Berlin’ vibe. Siouxsie And The Banshees came; so did U2, for 1991’s *Achtung Baby*. And, Meyer adds, “lots of bands from Finland”.

ON JANUARY 8, 2013, DAVID BOWIE CRASHED OUT OF semi-retirement by releasing his first new song in a decade. Where Are We Now?, a meditation on his Berlin days, name-checked the old hangouts with a restrained-but-pained melancholy. Some heard a man coming to terms with his own mortality. Others, pointing to the title, suggested that just as Bowie’s genius never deserted him, neither did his fears for the world.

*Eduard Meyer will be part of Bowie Berlin Week during September 25-30, 2017. Refer to www.musictours-berlin.com*

**MORE BOWIE!** TURN THE PAGE FOR THE FULL STORY OF *LODGER* AND ITS SONIC RESURRECTION IN 2017…



POST CARD

# THE FUGITIVE

Recorded in a concrete bunker in Montreux by an itinerant **DAVID BOWIE**, fleeing his past, *Lodger* was always the forgotten third of the 'Berlin Trilogy'. Now, following a Dame-endorsed remix by **TONY VISCONTI**, its mercurial power has been rediscovered. Story: **MARK PAYTRESS.**

Portrait by **DUFFY.**

Photo Duffy © Duffy Archive

**Hang tough: David Bowie, kept in suspense during Duffy's shoot for the *Lodger* sleeve, 1979. (See page 88 for the full story).**

DAVID BOWIE ALWAYS HAD A problem with *Lodger*. "We both felt the mix sounded thin and muddy," says producer Tony Visconti, sitting in an airy office at Warner Brothers' Kensington HQ.

"David and I always said we'd remix it one day. But like a thousand other projects, it never manifested."

In spring 2015, during a lull while the pair worked on *Blackstar*, Visconti picked his moment. "I'd had all the master tapes transferred when I did that mash-up for the V&A exhibition [David Bowie Is, 2013]. So I said to David, Let me get started on this. Let's see if it's even possible…"

Over a period of two or three weeks, Visconti opened up the multitracks for the five songs on the first side of *Lodger* and set to work. He knew exactly where to start. "David and I were proud of our drum sound," Visconti says. "It was always the first thing we made sure we got right. So I made the toms fuller, the snare really cracking, the kick drum thumping where it should be – right out front. From there I built up each track.

"I was convinced I nailed it," he continues. "Nowadays, the EQ is so forensic that you can go in there, find anything, and bring it out."

Back in the producer's small New York studio, late spring 2015, Bowie was preparing to record some vocal overdubs. "I said, Can I play you something first?" Visconti recalls. "As soon as he heard the tom fills at the start of Fantastic Voyage, a big smile broke out on his face. Then the special effects that were never there before. The reverb on his vocal. The guitar sound. He was so happy."

The old friends sat listening to the new mixes for half an hour. Bowie gave it his blessing. "Go ahead and finish this," he said. After nearly four decades in the wilderness, *Lodger*, the runt of the 'Berlin Trilogy' litter, was about to come in from the cold.

OF ALL BOWIE'S MAJOR ALBUMS, *Lodger* is the most troublesome, elusive and, in its own way, enigmatic. It's the one every biographer skips over, the 'Berlin' album that wasn't recorded in edgy, war-scarred Berlin at all but in a carpeted concert-and-studio complex situated between Lake Geneva, the French Alps and abundant vineyards.

"Montreux is very unsexy," says Visconti of the Swiss Riviera resort where, during August and September 1978, much of *Lodger* was taped. "There was nothing going on. None of the big rock stars living there, like Freddie Mercury and Rick Wakeman, hung out. Everyone had their own chateau or mansion.

"Dennis [Davis, Bowie's drummer] would always go out and jam with a local band. In Montreux, he ended up jamming with a cocktail pianist in the lobby of the hotel."

Bowie had been a Swiss resident since 1976, when he bought a 20-room chateau in Blonay, a hillside village overlooking Lake Geneva just a short drive from Montreux. He was there for tax reasons, and to convalesce after the perilous, coke-driven existence in Los Angeles detailed in the previous piece. Mostly, he wasn't in Montreux at all. Funtime had meant Berlin, city of extremes.

There he'd mixed *Low* and recorded *"Heroes"*. The latter's title track told a tale of star-crossed lovers conducting an affair beside the Wall, yet *"Heroes"* had been mixed at Mountain Studios, that businesslike complex in Montreux. One year on, in August 1978, the Berlin three of Bowie, Visconti and – synth in his briefcase, Oblique Strategies cards in his pocket – Brian Eno, were back. Only this time, they were there to record.

Bowie had promised a third and final part of "a triptych" – a term more familiar to art historians – ever since doing PR for *"Heroes"* late in 1977. But Montreux was hardly Berlin, with its mahogany interiors still stained with the darkest history. Neither was it Château d'Hérouville, the residential studio near Paris, where decayed grandeur, the ghost of Chopin stalking the corridors and a diet of rabbit and potatoes, all fed into the making of *Low*.

Mountain Studios was part of the Montreux Casino building, immortalised on Deep Purple's Smoke On The Water after the place burned down during a Frank Zappa concert in 1971. Reopening in 1975, the venue continued to host the Montreux Jazz Festival. More recent visitors to the studio, co-owned by US easy listening golden girl Anita Kerr, included Yes and ELP.

"It was a concrete bunker!" says Adrian Belew, lead guitarist on the sessions. "The first floor was the control room, where David, Brian and Tony would sit. They had a one-way television screen hooked up to the recording room, which was the room above, which you'd get to by walking up some concrete stairs. They could see you but you couldn't see them."

Visconti was horrified. "We'd come from [making *"Heroes"* in] Hansa in Berlin, where you had five musicians playing in a room meant for 100 musicians. This place was never meant to have seven musicians! The real purpose of Mountain Studios was to record live concerts downstairs in the big hall."

Not this time. *Lodger*, intended as Bowie's most ambitious project yet, was bashed into shape in an anonymous space that was barely bigger than a generous lounge. "We were dying!" says the producer. "The room was claustrophobic and the air-conditioner couldn't keep up with all the exhaling we were doing. Once we got a take, everyone scrambled for the doors. They didn't even wanna hear the playback."

Outside, everything was all Swiss cool: effortless, classy, colourless. Inside, the ersatz Alpine lodger and his team of outré rock explorers toiled in a climate more typical of the rainforest.

ONCE AGAIN, BOWIE WAS ON THE turn. The sessions took place between the first and second legs of a massive, arena-filling world tour. After almost two years in the wilderness, on March 29, 1978, Bowie unveiled the new show at the San Diego Sports Arena. Some 77 dates later, the tour was set to close in Tokyo on December 12.

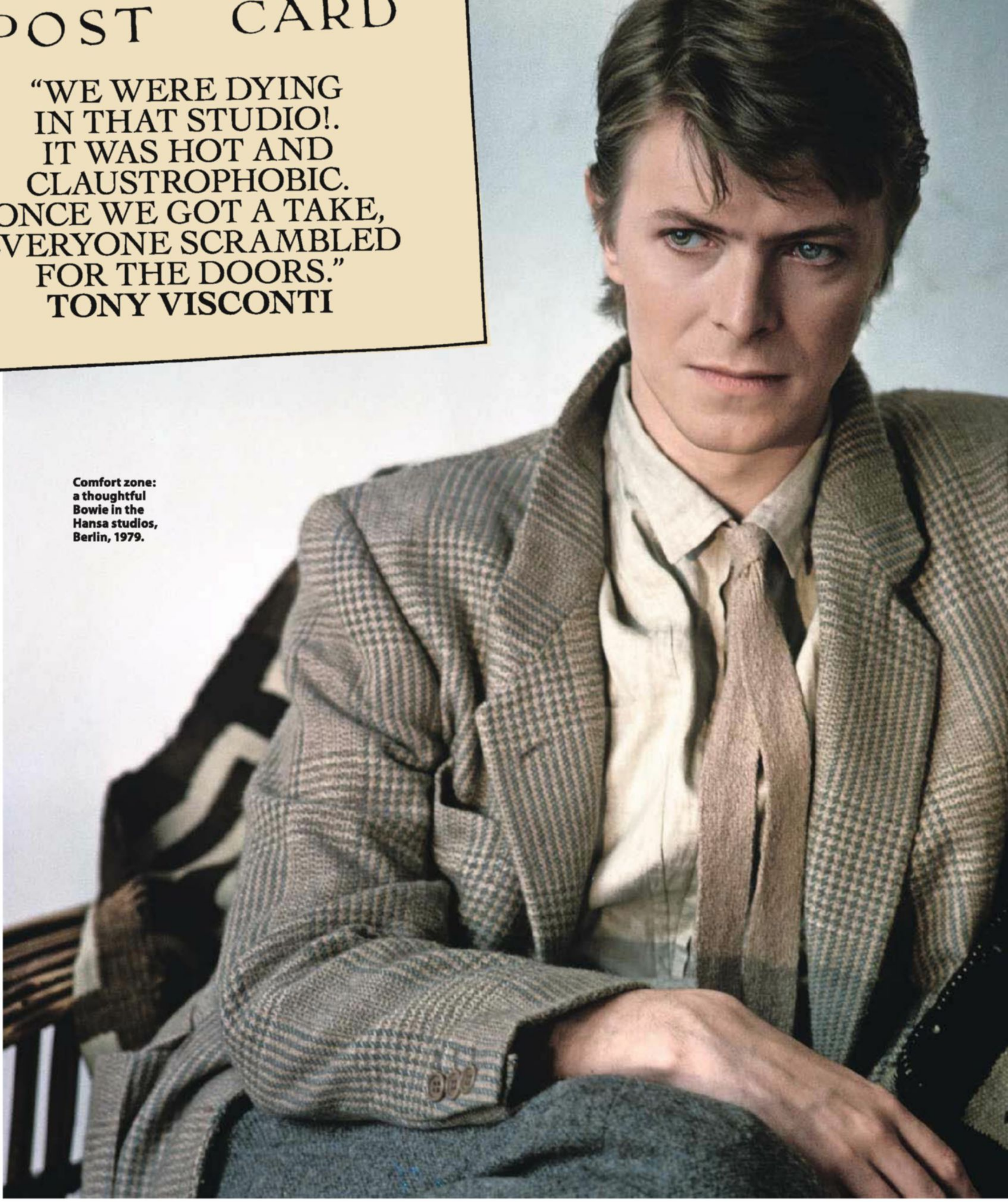
Still tanned after a recent safari trip to Kenya, Bowie was upbeat for the early shows. Gone was the haughty mystique of the '76 Thin White Duke persona. His band was big and bendable. The engine-room was his regular R&B core of Carlos Alomar (guitar/musical director), Dennis Davis (drums) and George Murray (bass). They were joined by keyboard/synth players Roger Powell and Sean Mayes, plus Simon House (electric violin) and a new young guitar virtuoso poached from Frank Zappa's band, Adrian Belew. The material was built around the sophisticated cool of the *Low*/*"Heroes"* material, spiced with a smattering of '70s hits and breaking out for a surprisingly nostalgic, crowd-pleasing batch of songs from *Ziggy Stardust*.

Bowie was welcomed back like rock royalty. RCA's PR campaign slogan for *"Heroes"* had been, "There's Old Wave. There's New Wave. And There's David Bowie…" Now, it seemed, from the fringes of rock to its chest-beating heart, Bowie was legitimate and fêted across a range of musical landscapes.

RCA
POST CARD
LODGER
David Bowie
OBLIQUE STRATEGIES
OBLIQUE STRATEGIES
Over one hundred worthwhile dilemmas
BRIAN ENO and PETER SCHMIDT
Third, again slightly revised edition, 1979
© 1975 Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt

POST CARD

“WE WERE DYING
IN THAT STUDIO!.
IT WAS HOT AND
CLAUSTROPHOBIC.
ONCE WE GOT A TAKE,
EVERYONE SCRAMBLED
FOR THE DOORS.”
**TONY VISCONTI**



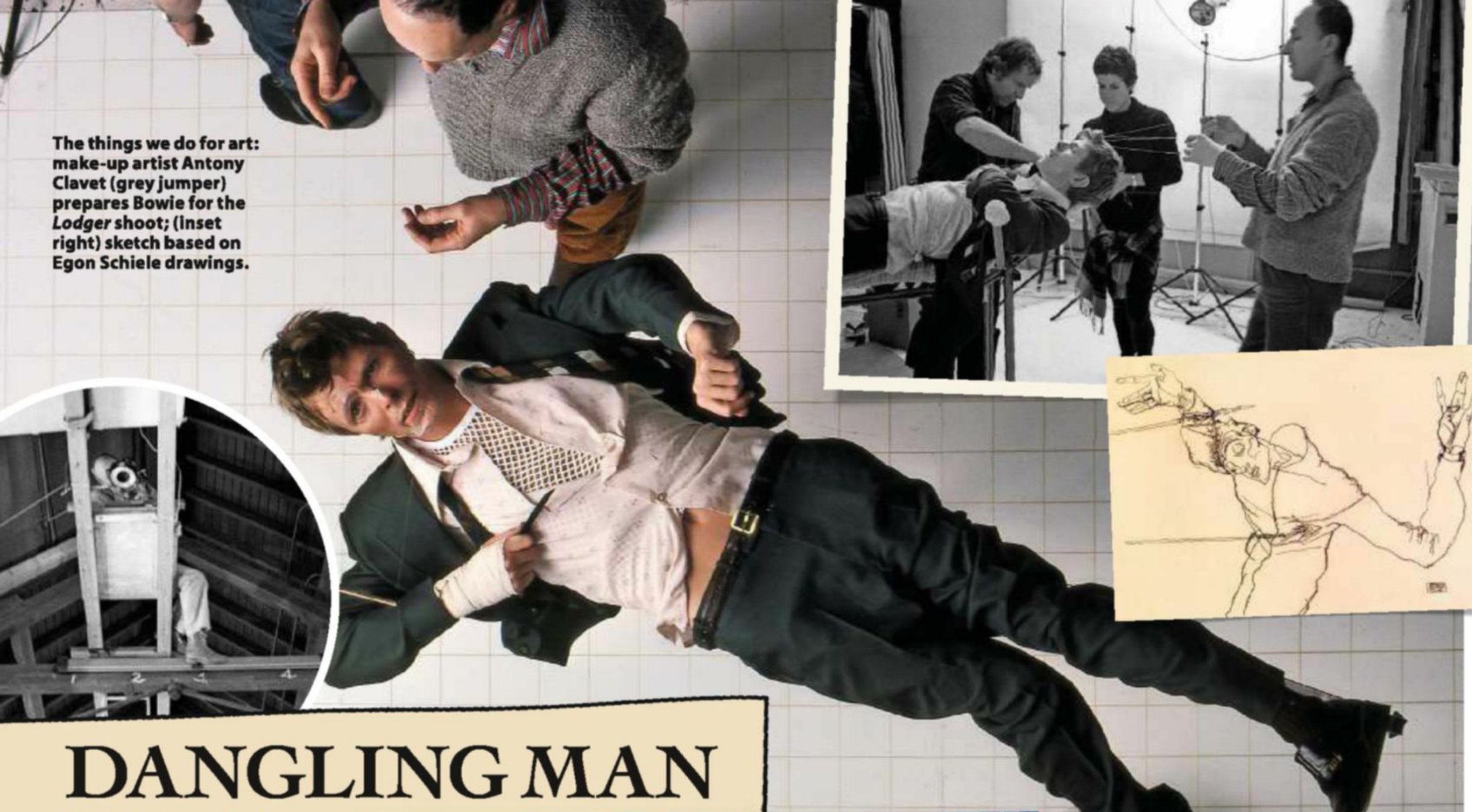
**Comfort zone: a thoughtful Bowie in the Hansa studios, Berlin, 1979.**

© Tony Visconti

He had expanded his world in a more literal sense too, especially since breaking his no-fly rule in spring 1977 while a low-key passenger on Iggy Pop’s North Atlantic Idiot tour. “He was doing his bucket list during the making of *Lodger*,” says Visconti. “He had gone to Africa [Kenya], he was an itinerant, travelling all over the world. He was enjoying himself.”

There were other, less pleasant reasons why Bowie kept on the move for much of 1978. “He was going through an acrimonious divorce,” the producer continues. “Between *Low* and *Lodger*, he’d gone through five managers and all the relationships ended badly. He was in quite a state, like, ‘What do I do next?’”

Bowie began the summer break from touring by spending much of his time with son Zowie (“Children are enjoyable little things,” he’d recently told Lisa Robinson). When he hit the studio, Bowie did what he always did during the Berlin era. He’d discuss ideas in the control room with Visconti and Eno, and sketch out chords or sequences on guitar or piano in the studio for Carlos Alomar. The guitarist then routined these fragments with what he calls “the D.A.M. Trio” – Davis, Alomar and Murray, the rhythm section who’d worked with Bowie since 1974’s *Young Americans* sessions. “It was a workshop,” says Alomar. “David would come back after an hour and we’d already jammed up three songs. It was like giving him a Chinese menu. He’d say, ‘I’ll have one from Column A and two from Column B!’ Then I’d put everything together into one seamless piece.” ➢



The things we do for art: make-up artist Antony Clavet (grey jumper) prepares Bowie for the *Lodger* shoot; (inset right) sketch based on Egon Schiele drawings.

# DANGLING MAN

## How *Lodger*'s freaky-ass sleeve shot came to be. "It wasn't supposed to be a glamorous image," the snapper's son tells **Danny Eccleston.**

"IN THAT PERIOD THERE WAS NO PHOTOSHOP. EVERYTHING YOU PUT ON FILM YOU HAD TO BUILD." CHRIS DUFFY

MUCH TO THE RCA label's dismay, David Bowie's most schizophrenic and obscure album so far was to enjoy his most obscure and alienating artwork. To deliver the singer's vision of a falling man, his face and limbs broken and distorted as if in the act of descent, Bowie had called on Brian Duffy, the photographer of 1973's iconic *Aladdin Sane* cover.

"Duffy was an amazing technician," notes his son Chris, who assisted at many of his father's shoots and now curates his legacy. "He understood lighting, set-building. Like the revolutionary 1977 Benson & Hedges [Special Filter] adverts he shot, or his award-winning Smirnoff ads – they were all productions. In that period there was no Photoshop. Everything you put on film you built."

The team – including artist Derek Boshier (art director), and make-up artist Antony Clavet (he met Bowie on Just A Gigolo) – assembled at Duffy's Swiss Cottage studio where he had installed a shooting platform in the rafters to shoot scenarios from above.

"My dad realised Bowie had to be suspended to make him appear to be floating," says Duffy Jr. "With his advertising connections, he knew the technicians who could build the rig that held David in position. It was lightweight aluminium with adjustable arms. Getting on was tricky but once on it was self-balancing."

Bowie's unnatural limb angles recalled his long-standing interest in gesture and mime. "And if you look at the Egon Schiele pictures Bowie was referencing [notably, the Austrian painter's 1914 Self Portrait As St Sebastian], they are similarly angular, disjointed," adds Chris Duffy. "David was looking to inject that sense of uneasiness, and adding the distortion to his face, using fishing wire to forcibly change the shape of his nose and cheek and lips… it wasn't supposed to be a glamorous image."

The challenging visual was made edgier still when Bowie chose not the high-resolution Kodachrome images Duffy had crafted, but one of the Polaroids he'd banged off at the end of the shoot. "It was punk in a way," says Chris, "distorted, rough. But the printing further degraded the image. I'm not sure Bowie had counted on that."

The inner gatefold collage used more Polaroids – Duffy's shots of water spouting from a bathroom sink – plus archive shots of Che Guevara's corpse, some Omega wristwatches, Mantegna's 1480 Lamentation Of Christ, a mortuary, all arranged by Derek Boshier, who also used a "work in progress" pic of the cover set-up. Also, a picture of a baby from a knitting pattern; this would later cause trouble.

"After the album came out someone phoned the label and said it was their baby and threatened to sue," recalls Chris Duffy. "Of course the record label had no proof that it wasn't so they paid up."

While its cover art could hardly be said to have smoothed the oddball *Lodger*'s commercial path, it has since consolidated its aura of discombobulation. And Bowie must have liked it; he came back to Duffy for the *Scary Monsters* sleeve, and even drew on aspects of the shoot in his last works.

"It's funny how the feel of the *Lodger* shoot came into David's last videos," says Chris Duffy, "like the Lazarus video in the tiled room, David rising off the bed. He seems to have revisited that – that clinical space, and the emotion it brings."

< "There were no songs on the table," Visconti confirms. "There never were. The experimentation is obvious on *Low*, alarmingly so. On *"Heroes"*, it's a little less obvious. We were still pushing boundaries for *Lodger*. But they became such pretty pop songs that you'd never think there was a point at the beginning where we didn't know what the fuck we were doing. It took a little longer to get to the stage where David wrote songs. It wasn't all that easy."

"There was always a methodology and it was this," Alomar explains. "A: Songwriting. B: Arrangement. C: Production. It's consistent on all three [Berlin] albums, though sometimes we'd get it a little mixed up. But there'd always come a time when [David, Tony and Brian] would kinda take over…"

ENO ARRIVED IN MONTREUX WITH A COPY OF THE Walker Brothers' new reunion LP, *Nite Flights*. Singer Scott Walker had contributed four solo songs, all clearly influenced by Bowie and Eno's 'Berlin' work.

It was a surprise endorsement and one that meant a lot to Bowie, a long-time Walker enthusiast, at a time when critical support was inconsistent. Although *"Heroes"* was acclaimed, *Low* had received a bashing when it kicked off the cycle back in January 1977. Now, 18 months later, Bowie had a surprise of his own, too…

In the weeks before starting work on *Lodger*, Bowie and Eno exchanged a few ideas. The methodology, it seemed, would be an intensification of what Bowie called the "art pranks" they'd used on the previous two titles – often inspired by a card pulled from the Oblique Strategies pack. (Sense Of Doubt, on *"Heroes"*, for example, was inspired by two conflicting cards, one stating "Emphasise differences", another suggesting to make things the same.) Naturally, the provisional album title was *Planned Accidents*.

Only this time, there'd be no soundscapes of the impressionistic, synthesizer-led kind that dominated the *Low* and *"Heroes"* second sides. This division had been a neat reflection of cultural juxtapositions: East/West, rock/experimental, David/Brian, pop/art. "The original plan was to record more ambient music for the B-side," Visconti says. "But David was on a roll. He didn't wanna go there."

Photo Duffy © Duffy Archive (5)

Perhaps he'd been encouraged by Alabama Song, recorded at Visconti's Good Earth Studio in Soho on July 2, the day after the Earls Court show closed the first leg of the tour. "David wanted that to sound more like a circus," says Alomar of the hasty, tour memento session. "He didn't want a regular arrangement. So when he heard it and said it was great I was really proud." It was not a personal favourite, though. "Honestly, I think it's only great because it was twisted. But that was what he was looking for."

Alomar adds a second twist. It was, he says, "those crazy things I learned with Brian Eno, all that changing things around", that helped inspire him to create the song's fragmented arrangement. With the natural balance of the hard/soft side put out to pasture, Bowie and Eno both worked with the raw rock-based material roughed up by the D.A.M. Trio. Each night, they'd leave with a bunch of tapes, returning the next day having identified snatches of rhythms for loops and loopy ideas for song construction.

Adrian Belew arrived in Montreux around the same time as the other overdub musicians, Simon House and Sean Mayes. The D.A.M. Trio were still working up backing tracks before they returned to New York a few days later. The guitarist recalls much mirth and a unity of focus at the console.

"On my arrival, David and Brian said, 'We want you to go upstairs, put the headphones on and when you hear the drumsticks count in, start playing.' I laughed and said, Can I hear the song first? 'Nope, you don't get to hear the song first.' I said, Can you tell me what key it's in? 'Nope.'

"They just wanted my first impulsive reactions to each song. Later, they'd pick out their favourite moments and composite them together to make one guitar track." That's how the extraordinary lines and solos in Red Sails, DJ and Boys Keep Swinging came about. "Curious way to make a record, huh?" says Belew.

It was Belew's impression that Brian Eno was "probably the prime mover, the one who was brought in to make things happen that wouldn't ordinarily happen." A couple of stray titles in Visconti's production notes from the early days of the sessions, "Eno's Jungle Box" and "Pope Brian", add weight to the theory.

With half a dozen musicians now vying for space in the upstairs studio, Eno took the 'Planned Accidents' idea to new heights of absurdity. In his posthumous memoir, Mayes remembers him writing names of chords on bits of card, pinning them to a wall then pointing at them randomly with a baton expecting the musicians to follow. This, apparently, went on for a couple of hours. It didn't go down well with the players and, says Visconti, came to nothing.

Bowie, always more visceral, had his own ways to get what he was looking for. One day, the D.A.M. Trio were playing just too well. "Our methodology was perfection," Alomar recalls. "That was the problem. I couldn't get that lack of syncopation from George and Dennis because they were so locked. They couldn't play like 14-year-old kids playing in a garage would. And that's what David wanted."

Bowie stopped the band. "'You know what? This sucks! Carlos can you play drums?' I said, Hell no. He said, 'Good, play drums. Dennis, What don't you play?' I don't play bass good. 'OK, play bass.'"

The result, with George Murray on keyboards, was Boys Keep Swinging. Insistent like "Heroes", hamfisted like punk, the song was – unlike Eno's 'back to school' method – the perfectly imperfect planned accident.

Bowie and Eno's 'Boffin & King' working relationship was breaking up. The session dynamics changed. Eno later claimed that *Lodger* started out "extremely promisingly and quite revolutionary". Study the composer credits closely and it seems he was right. Move On, Yassassin, Repetition and Red Money, all likely recorded later in the sessions and with little or no Eno involvement, are generally less ambitious than the six that bear his name. Perhaps Bowie was deflated by the disagreements that Eno later admitted had taken place. Certainly, had *Lodger* been released as one of those vogueish six-song mini-albums, it would have met a quite different reaction. "I could tell that the partnership had run its natural course on that album," Visconti confirms. "It was pretty obvious to me." But before things properly soured, Eno – who'd arrived in Montreux buoyed by his acclaimed production work with Devo and Talking Heads, two of '78s most cutting-edge bands – clearly left an indelible mark on *Lodger*.

"Oh, he did a lot on this album," Visconti acknowledges. "African Night Flight is almost all Brian and he sings backup. And he had a lot to do with Red Sails. It was great having the three of us sing together on that."

Further co-writer credits on Boys Keep Swinging and Fantastic Voyage (one upbeat, one downbeat, both based on the same chord sequence), DJ and the juggernaut that is Look Back In Anger, tell their own story.

CARLOS ALOMAR RECKONED BOWIE had been "more subdued" than usual in Montreux. Visconti once admitted he'd had an "ominous feeling" about *Lodger*, adding that he felt Bowie's heart wasn't fully in it. When Bowie and Visconti reconvened, at the Record Plant, New York in March 1979, Bowie had booked one week to record all the lead vocals, a few overdubs with Adrian Belew and synth man Roger Powell (who at one point was asked to play a part "like bodies falling behind doors"), and mix everything.

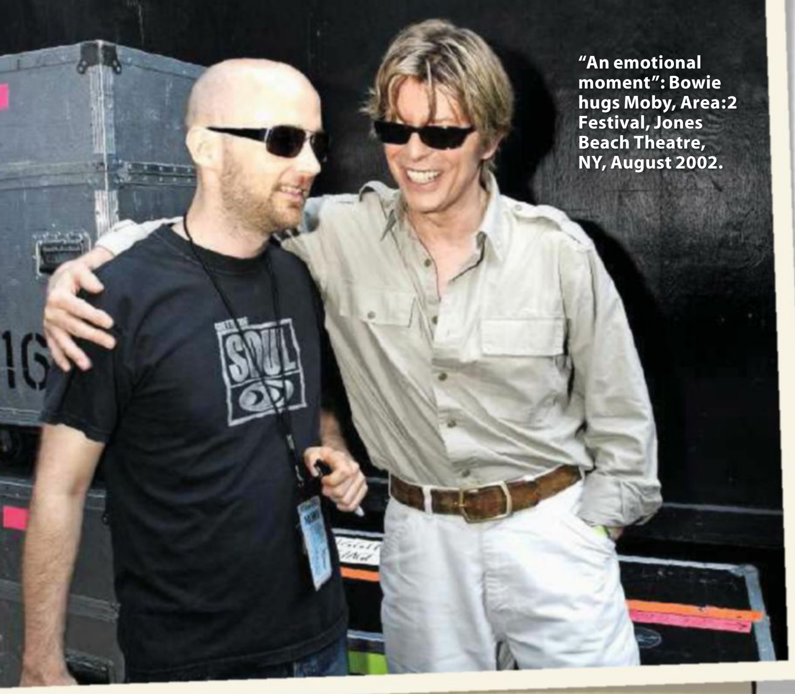
If he was distracted, it was understandable. Having recently completed his world tour, and seen his latest film Just A Gigolo take a hammering from the critics, the prospect of revisiting a seven-month-old bunch of tapes, often inspired but disorderly, couldn't have filled him with joy. Every song needed lyrics and vocals. The entire album required some kind of mixing-desk miracle.

"We were assigned Studio D," Visconti grumbles. The main room was booked out to Kiss. "There was absolutely no mixing equipment there, maybe two limiters, and we were on a tight deadline. It was make or break. We had to do it; we had no choice." After the hasty (and generally impressive) vocals and the hastier mix, the producer hoped the album – now titled *Lodger* after Roman Polanski's unsettling, paranoia-wracked 1976 film The Tenant – could be saved in mastering. Sequencing ➢

the walker brothers
NITE FLIGHTS
POST CARD
Boys Keep Swinging
Fantastic Voyage
David Bowie
RCA
DJ
D A V I D B O W I E
APARTMENT FOR RENT Quiet bldg. Furnished. 3 rooms. Previous tenant committed suicide.
Roman Polanski's "Chinatown" exposed the dark side of corruption.
His 'Repulsion' explored a warped mind.
His 'Rosemary's Baby' delved into the occult.
Now, Roman Polanski's 'The Tenant'... something altogether new, altogether chilling.
No one does it to you like Roman Polanski
THE TENANT

**"They just wanted my first impulsive reactions to each song": guitarist Adrian Belew; (insets, from top) Bowie-influenced Walker Brothers LP *Nite Flights*; singles from *Lodger*; Roman Polanski's 1976 film The Tenant, inspiration for the LP's title.**

Getty Images


“An emotional moment”: Bowie hugs Moby, Area:2 Festival, Jones Beach Theatre, NY, August 2002.

◄ *Lodger* to start with Fantastic Voyage, the most despairing song on the set, the one that spoke openly of depression, was a clue. “David was tired of the journey,” Alomar maintains. The sleeve, which portrayed a clapped-out Bowie on a postcard addressed to himself c/o his record company, was iconoclastic to the point of ruinous. Bowie did no meaningful interviews to promote the record. Even the title sounded lifeless. It’s not difficult to see why *Lodger* became the album that got away.

BACK IN THE WARNER BROTHERS OFFICE, THE newly mixed and mastered *Lodger* has just finished playing. It’s hugely impressive, like a secret gift that had been buried under the floorboards for nigh-on 40 years. Visconti is smiling. *Lodger* is the third and final part of the Eno Trilogy rather than anything to do with Berlin, he explains. More prosaically, he adds, “It just ended up as an album full of great songs.”

The first thing you notice is the voice. “With a great singer like David Bowie, there’s no point in burying the voice in the mix so, starting with Fantastic Voyage, I brought it forward and put a nicer EQ on it to give more depth and presence,” says Visconti. And those nine overdubbed mandolins on this classic, always underrated opener now sound like a string section.

The cluttered sound that bothered audiences first time round clutters no longer. For example: “The backing track for African Night Flight, with all those looped African chants and animal noises, was originally made by editing, like, six pieces of tape together. It was a terrible way to mix a track.” Now, the producer says, thanks to Pro-Tools, those razorblade edits have gone. No need for a lyric sheet to decipher Bowie’s rapid-fire monologue on this one either.

Now crystal-clear, with super-enriched vocals and drums, *Lodger* 2017 also crackles with smaller enhancements. More pronounced backing vocals on Move On. More Arabic-style vocals as Yassassin fades. A vastly improved Red Sails, now sounding much closer to the Chinese propaganda song that Bowie originally intended. (“We should have sung it in Mandarin!” says the producer.)

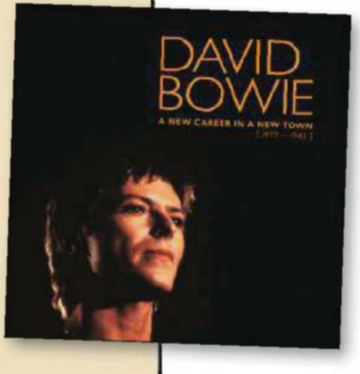
DJ kicks harder and Simon House’s violin is more to the fore. “All the support musicians were meant to be heard,” says Visconti. For Boys Keep Swinging, the producer, who’d dubbed a more stable bass part on it at the New York sessions, gives the drums more consistency, filling in some of those dropped beats. He also found some discarded backing vocals, repeated “Boys keep swinging” lines, but didn’t see the point of editing them back in. Repetition remains as small and mean as a song about wife-beating was meant to be.

The album closes, poignantly, with Red Money, a rewrite of Sister Midnight, a Bowie-Pop-Alomar co-write for Iggy Pop’s *The Idiot* and the song that ignited the Berlin venture. Visconti discovered that the master tape had stretched down the years, which occasionally slows the song down. “It’s unavoidable,” he says. “But with all the special effects flying around, it makes it more psychedelic.”

One song still mystifies the producer. “We loved Look Back In Anger,” he says. “I wanted the world to explode when he sang out loud, just like I did in Hansa for “Heroes”. I’ve now used effects to emphasise the emotion of the lyric. But I still can’t understand why our ‘Waiting so long’ backing vocal sounded like us at the start of the song, and like John and Paul on She’s Leaving Home by the end!”

Adrian Belew has a theory. “When I first heard *Lodger*, I played it four or five times and thought, I don’t know what I think of this. I’d had exactly the same reaction to *Sgt. Pepper*, so I knew it was a good thing. Both albums have such an amazing range of material. *Lodger* was full of all the different things Bowie could do up to that point.”

So why the reluctance to sell it to the world? “I think it was to do with those times,” says Carlos Alomar. “Sometimes it’s better to have a more subtle whisper than a loud voice, especially when everybody else was being so damn loud.”



*David Bowie — A New Career In A New Town [1977-1982], an 11-disc CD or 13-disc vinyl box set including the new mix of Lodger, is out on September 29.*

Getty Images

# “*LODGER* HAD A SUCH A SPECIFIC POINT OF VIEW”

For **MOBY**, life divides into “before” and “after” *Lodger*.

“I FIRST READ about *Lodger* in the spring of 1979. My middle-school library had a subscription to Rolling Stone and they ran this review that was so compelling I just had to have it. I already loved David Bowie. My mum belonged to the Columbia Record Club, where you sent them a penny and they sent you 10 records. One of the records was *ChangesOne*. I listened to it obsessively. But even then I knew David Bowie was too weird for suburban Darien, Connecticut.

That summer, I got my first ever job, as caddy at an exclusive country club, and I worked for as long as it took to make the six dollars to buy *Lodger*. But when I finally got it home and played it, it didn’t make any sense to me. I was 13, 14, I didn’t have a girlfriend or a job, I was bored to death in the middle of the summer, and I’d spent all my money; there was no better use of my time than to obsessively pore over my David Bowie record.

> “BOWIE WAS DOING SOMETHING OSTENSIBLY CONVENTIONAL BUT ALSO FUTURISTIC.”

So I listened to this magical totem over and over again, gleaning messages until, gradually, it came into focus. With Look Back In Anger I realised, he was doing something ostensibly conventional but also futuristic. It had a such a specific point of view. The world he was creating was quotidian and other-worldly at the same time, just like the LP cover.

I spent a lot of time trying to figure out that gatefold sleeve. I remember thinking, This is art: I don’t understand it, but they clearly know what they’re doing. That was my introduction to semiotics. He was laying out these signifiers and codes. I studied everything on that sleeve. Another thing I couldn’t figure was that Eno credit: “ambient drone”. I thought it was a jokey insult, about somebody who won’t ever shut up.

I forced myself to listen to it as a whole. As much as I enjoyed DJ and Boys Keep Swinging I’d focus on Yassassin, and African Night Flight. If I didn’t immediately like something it meant there was something wrong with me: keep listening until it makes complete sense.

As I discovered other Bowie records I realised they were better. *Scary Monsters* was like *Lodger* on steroids. You understand why people forgot about *Lodger*, but for me it was transformational, this Saul-on-the-road-to-Damascus moment. All of a sudden I became aware of Public Image, Killing Joke, Joy Division, Magazine. My life was very much before and after *Lodger*.

When Bowie and I became neighbours in 2000, we had a strange friendship. We toured together, spent Christmases together, went to the coffee shop together, but the entire time we were friends I never mentioned the impact he and his music had on me. I never loved another musician as much as him, but I never told him. I didn’t want to be that person. I was always afraid of saying anything that would make him run away.

But there was one moment. I was in his apartment in 2001 and he played me the demo of [*Heathen*’s] Slip Away. It was just the two of us, and it was a moment of vulnerability for him. There’s not a lot of totally autobiographical stuff in his work but Slip Away is *just* autobiographical and vulnerable. I was able to communicate just how much I loved it and in that moment I was able to demonstrate the love I had for him and his work. It didn’t feel academic. It felt like he warmed to that more than, ‘You know that song you made 30 years ago?’ It was an emotional moment.”

# MOJO FILTER

YOUR GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S BEST MUSIC. EDITED BY JENNY BULLEY

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> "A sprint through England's absurdity and doom ends with Anthony & Cleopatra and that crate of ale."
>
> **JOHN HARRIS REVIVES *THE QUEEN IS DEAD*, REISSUES, P106**

## RATINGS & FORMATS

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| ★★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★ | ★ | ☆ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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THEATRE of HATE
Let The Electric Children Play
The underground story of Transatlantic Records 1968 – 1
AT YA
OWEN BROOMFIELD aka
PEGGY SEEGER
First Time Ever

# Ahead of the pack

The north London band's debut won Mercury and Grammy nominations. Now its follow-up goes deeper and wilder, says **Keith Cameron**. Illustration by **Paul Birkbeck**.

## Wolf Alice

★★★★

### Visions Of A Life

DIRTY HIT. CD/DL/LP

**KEY TRACKS**
- Heavenward
- Yuk Foo
- Don't Delete The Kisses
- Sadboy

As a British indie rock group formed in the second decade of the 21st century, Wolf Alice are both symptomatic of their environment and also quite exceptional. Singer Ellie Rowsell 'met' guitarist Joff Oddie on an internet forum; their early rush of singles, EPs and tracks saw the north London quartet feted in the online world. Wolf Alice were "the UK's most blogged band" in 2013 according to blog aggregator Hype Machine, either a badge of honour or a slur, depending on your perspective.

Yet there were vital signs beneath the media churn: Rowsell and Oddie had ways with singing and melody that took their ostensibly well-adjusted songs to unexpected places, while flamboyant bassist Theo Ellis and drummer Joel Amey offered more than 'just' rhythmic anchorage. Raw assets honed by a fierce touring ethic, by 2015 the band named after an Angela Carter short-story had such a foothold in both the physical and virtual realms that debut album *My Love Is Cool* entered the UK chart at Number 2.

Nonetheless, a critical narrative had already emerged, deeming the band too diverse for its own good: channelling post-*Nevermind* glossed grunge one moment, winsome pop the next, folksy singer-songwriter testifying all around, it was argued Wolf Alice's muddle of styles diluted their impact. If anything, however, *My Love Is Cool* wasn't undermined by multiple personalities – the very quality that defined the band, after all – but rather a disinclination to unleash them. Even its best songs felt reticent, while a few verged close to generic box-ticking. What they did next would be key: curb the quirks and acquiesce to the music industry's preference for one good idea repeated ad infinitum; or heed the imperatives of *My Love Is Cool*'s satirically cute Freazy and unleash their inner "feral child".

Cheeringly, Wolf Alice chose the more interesting route. *Visions Of A Life* indicates a band purged of self-consciousness and venturing deep into the woods. The shift is exemplified by Sadboy: this initally slight, lulling nursery rhyme ("There's a dark cloud above your head") soon turns to face the strange via modal drones, backwards guitars and treated vocals turning a light on the song's troubled protagonist, who eventually admits with the help of a siren choir: "I was waiting for anything to happen, waiting for this to not hurt." Waves of sonic distress peck at the melody, revealing turmoil behind the mask. Here is the entire record's energy in microcosm.

Amid the stylistic free range, producer Justin Meldal-Johnsen and mix engineer Tom Elmhirst broker a balance between detail and feel, gloss and grit. The subjects of these 12 songs, who may very well include Ellie Rowsell herself, are serenaded and celebrated, berated and commemorated, as they weave through knotty dramas of body and mind: the visceral currency that so preoccupies people in their mid-twenties (and pretty much everyone else), when childhood is still a clear memory and adulthood feels no less confusing.

The effervescent hopscotch soul of Beautifully Unconventional makes a virtue of economy, Rowsell precisely enunciating her lovestruck hymn to a girl called Hannah ("Calm but so extreme"). On Don't Delete The Kisses' electro oscillations, meanwhile, she applies her rigour to a spoken litany of romantic clichés ("How awful is that! I'm like a teenage girl/I might as well write all over my notebook that you rock my world"). Suggestive of The Cure covering All Saints' Black Coffee, there's a pervasive nonspecific sadness, in spite of the notionally happy ending ("I see the signs of a lifetime/You 'til I die"), a sense bolstered by the pensive guitar downstrokes which herald the ensuing Planet Hunter's reflection on "a moment's happiness/madness" that's Tears For Fears-bleak. For light relief, the wired trip-hop of Sky Musings warns that stewing about this stuff on a plane with wine while watching Miss Congeniality leads to panic attacks.

It's a collective triumph, but Ellie Rowsell and her voices – strident or vulnerable, droll or spooky, cooing or infernal – dominate this record. Ahead of Yuk Foo's enraged profanity-strewn cyberpunk vision of Bikini Kill, she just as plausibly evokes Sandy Denny on the disconsolate space-rock of opener Heavenward, a gorgeous elegy for the departed, borne aloft on distressed guitar nebulae. Rowsell's fondness for velveteen wyrd colours the album's brooding late-sequence: the sexual liberation morality play After The Zero Hour, where Oddie's fingerpicking lends filigree'd flair to this tale of a girl who "refused to cry/But embraced her lust for life"; the preceding St Purple & Green plausibly evokes My Bloody Valentine going the full Sally Oldfield. All this comes after Space And Time has re-cast Eno's Needles In The Camel's Eye as a feminist anthem, and still before the epic closing title track sees Rowsell issue the last word in break-up throwdowns: "I heard that journeys end in lovers meeting, but my journey ends when my heart stops beating."

*Visions Of A Life* explodes the theory that even the best millennial bands struggle to craft cogent albums. It has a head, a tail and a massive great beating heart. Of course, there were portents on Wolf Alice's earlier records – Moaning Lisa Smile is a great lost P.J. Harvey song – but elsewhere too. In 2016, Ellie Rowsell wrote an eloquent article for the New Statesman about "Love, jealousy and fantasy worlds" and the special intensity of female friendships. She considered how although Bros, Wolf Alice's 2013 single, is "on the surface…a happy song, I see a panic in the words." Repeatedly on *Visions Of A Life*, Wolf Alice capture these conflicted feelings, the emotional trapped nerves that haunt our lives. Their time is now.

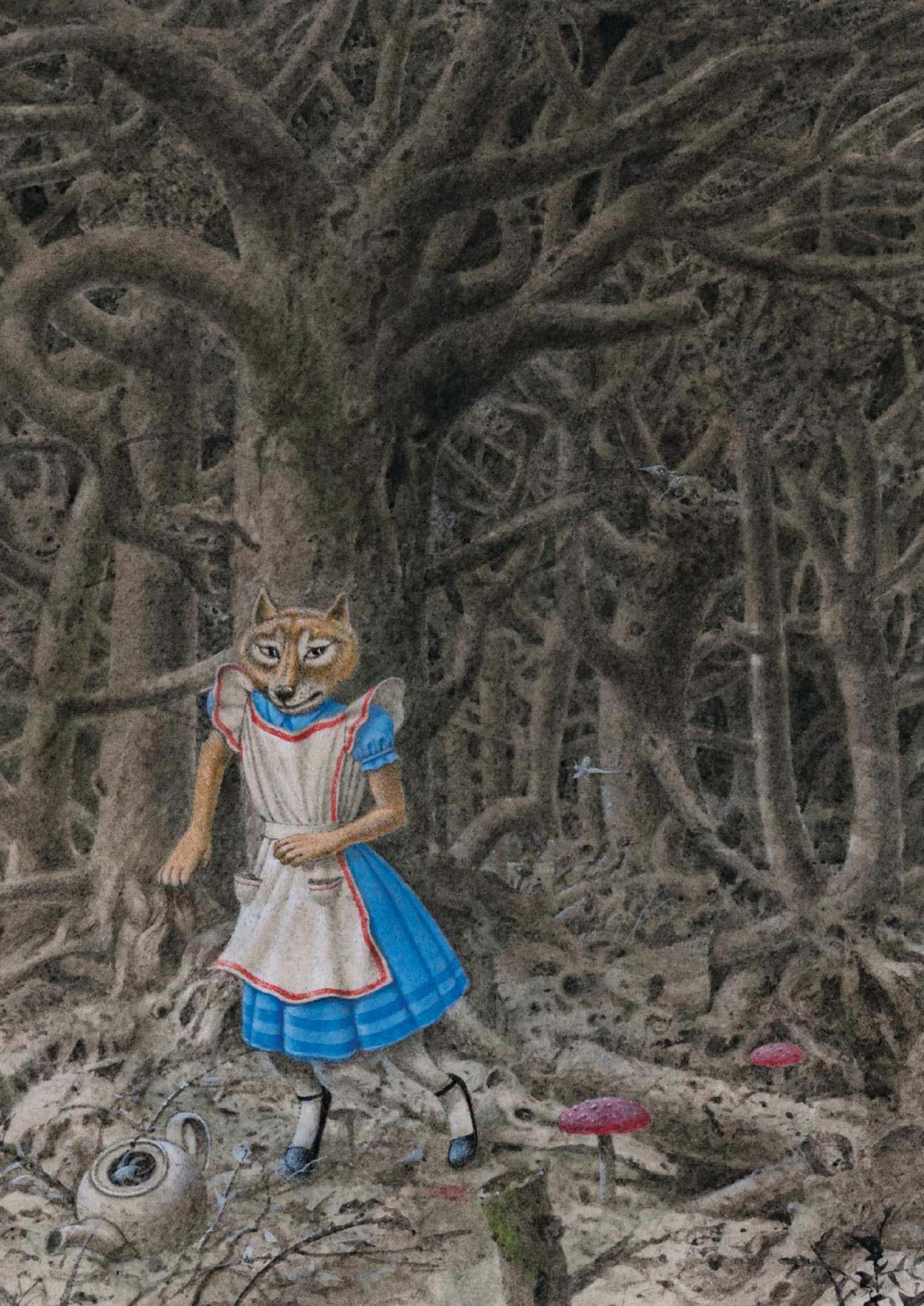
**BACK STORY: LIFE LESSONS**

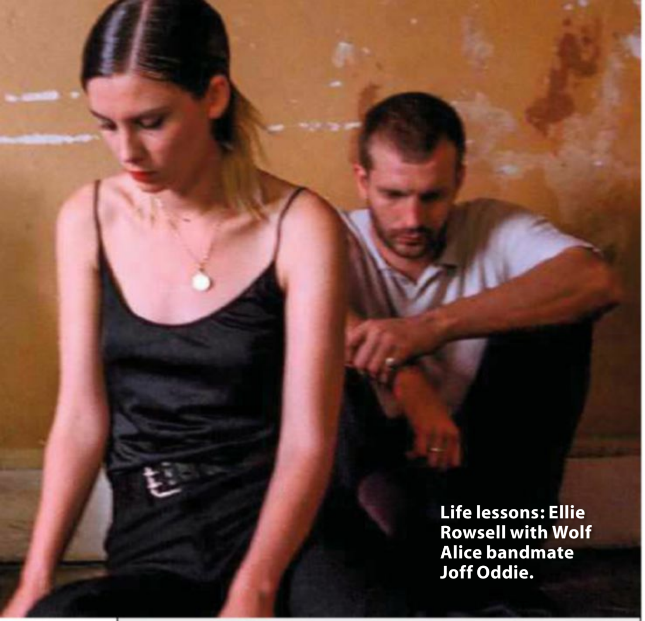
● *Visions Of A Life*'s eerily evocative cover image of a young girl in dance costume next to an animal skull has special resonance for Wolf Alice singer Ellie Rowsell. "I had this picture that I had an inkling I was going to want to use for the artwork. The girl in the picture has had some kind of scenario being played out in her head that she was bringing to life. The girl is my auntie, and she really did become a dancer. I don't know if she had that vision for her life, but I liked that – it was romantic for me. My mother took that picture, she must have been about six. I think it's a sheep's skull. Maybe a horse."

> **"ELLIE ROWSELL AND HER VOICES – STRIDENT OR VULNERABLE, DROLL OR SPOOKY, COOING OR INFERNAL – DOMINATE THIS RECORD."**

**WOLF TALKS!** ELLIE ROWSELL ON SNAP-SHOTS IN TIME, GETTING BRAVER AND BEING RELATED TO A FOO.

Laura Allard Fleischl





Life lessons: Ellie Rowsell with Wolf Alice bandmate Joff Oddie.

# "I feel like a different person."

## Wolf Alice's Ellie Rowsell talks to Keith Cameron.

**Your first album was recorded on home turf: north London. Two years later you've made the follow-up in California…**

"Purely because the producer we wanted, Justin Meldal-Johnsen, he's based there. We felt Justin would complement us. He has big experience with rock music – he's played with Nine Inch Nails and Beck. He also has a huge appreciation of pop music. He's also done lo-fi garage bands like The Raveonettes, and huge synthy bands like M83. He's versatile."

**How does the new album relate to its predecessor?**

"Our first record was a snapshot of time and this second record is a snapshot of a different time. There's no concept to either of them, it's more like song forms of diary entries. Taking what life throws at you and putting it to music. That's why there's no consistency of feeling or dynamic or even of style, really. Because such is life!"

**As the band's lyricist, what is your perspective within the songs?**

"I think I sing about myself 90 per cent of the time. But I'm aware that it *isn't* a diary entry, it's creating art. I mould it, so it's lyrical or poetic or humorous."

**Have you grown up a lot within this relatively short space of time?**

"Your early twenties is a fast-paced period anyway. Within five years you can really change, even if nothing was to happen. So yeah, I feel like a different person. I wasn't short of things to write about. In a nutshell, for the first 20 years of my life, I lived in the same house. Now I'm never in the same city for more than one day. Meeting new people and losing old people. Those kind of things… As a band, we've all become a lot braver, especially in our own individual influences. We were all insecure about trying things out on the first record. Now we go with the mantra: you only regret the things you don't do."

**Is there a hint of Bikini Kill on Yuk Foo?**

"I had just read [Michael Azerrad's] Our Band Could Be Your Life, and I was listening to all those bands on tour – Minor Threat, Black Flag, Mission Of Burma. We were enjoying playing faster, heavier songs in our set, so I wrote a few more aggressive ones. Then I moved on. I don't have just one song I want to write."

**How did you get the call to play Dave Grohl's upcoming Cal Jam festival?**

"We actually recorded the new album's drums and bass in a different studio to where we spent the majority of our time in Los Angeles, and Foo Fighters were working next door. They were really nice, we saw them every day for about three weeks. So maybe that played a part."

**I gather one of you is related to a Foo Fighter…**

"*(Laughs)* Theo's cousin's cousin is Chris Shiflett. So it's a tenuous link!"

Laura Allard Fleisch

## David Crosby

★★★★

### Sky Trails

BMG. CD/DL/LP

**His third album in four years: the late-reblooming Cros is on a roll.**

Los Angeles has been rock music's home of sun-kissed spiritual unease since Love and The Doors, stylistically peaking with the Asylum label's slick jazzoid soft-rock and Joni Mitchell's mid-'70s masterpieces. Her 1976 classic Amelia is the meditation of a specifically female solo flier, a gamble for a male to cover. Here LA native Crosby sings it with humility, a touching tribute from a 76-year-old veteran to his stricken comrade. The '70s resonate within the 10 exquisitely crafted tracks, opening with the Steely Dan-esque She's Got To Be Somewhere, written by Crosby's son James Raymond who co-writes four others and produces throughout. As with 2016's *Lighthouse* album, a mood of wistful personal and spiritual quest pervades; if there is an answer, it's in two of the last three songs, Somebody Home and Home Free.

*Mat Snow*

## Squeeze

★★★★

### The Knowledge

LOVE. CD/DL/LP

**Taxi-driver's grasp of the A-Z, or five-decade-deep songwriting suss?**

It takes flair to write a politically-charged, musically pukka song in praise of our NHS's everyday heroes, but A&E, yet another of Difford & Tilbrook's fanfares for the common man/woman, gets it just right. However, that coup is soon trumped by Final Score, a beautifully modulating and decidedly topical tale of a footballing-kid-turned-adult trying to come to terms with abuse at the hands of his former coach. Now with Yolanda Charles on bass, Squeeze brim with a relaxed confidence here. Musical touches such as Stephen Large's baroque harpsichord solo on Patchouli and the little three-note 'now boarding' motif that opens Departure Lounge cement the sense of an act that know exactly how to proceed, even when detailing the specifics of a vinyl junkie and early Fleetwood Mac devotee's tattoo (see Albatross).

*James McNair*

## Dhani Harrison

★★★

### IN///PARALLEL

BMG. CD/DL/LP

**Family line: Beatle scion makes solo debut.**

As the son of George, Dhani Harrison inevitably comes with a lot of genetic baggage, but admirably, his first solo album is largely heavy only in the ways he wants it to be. As well as playing alongside Ben Harper and Joseph Arthur in Fistful Of Mercy and in his own thenewno2, Harrison has written soundtracks for film and TV, and that's the work that informs *IN///PARALLEL*, a collection of judiciously orchestrated, densely textured tracks that often demand accompanying visuals. Murky, clotted trip-hop prevails on Úlfur Resurrection and Summertime Police, while Poseidon (Keep Me Safe) hits the sinister distortions and whispering beats hard. There are more linear moments – the *Abbey Road* echoes of Admiral Of Upside Down and All About Waiting – but maybe understandably, this is a record that prefers grand gestures and sweeping backdrops over the tight focus, the intimate close-up.

*Victoria Segal*

## Baxter Dury

★★★★

### Prince Of Tears

HEAVENLY. CD/DL/LP

**Illustrious son of Blockhead leader's career best.**

Since debuting in a sheepish falsetto on 2002's *Len Parrot's Memorial Lift*, Dury Jr has hardly been chasing glory, rather blowing a little hot and cold across occasional waxings. At best, 2011's *Happy Soup* pitched him somewhere between cracked post-Kinksian pop portraiture and home-studio esoterica. This fifth album raises the stakes: a break-up last year fuelled not an outpouring of self-pity, rather a sharpening of his writerly pen. Miami leads off unforgettably, as a cod-gangster's braggadocio rolls out so laughably that we, and cooing co-vocalist Madelaine Hart, are in no doubt about his impotence. Amid fruity vernacular and gruff voicing now comfortably reminiscent of his old man, Baxter's latter-day 'cocaine funkiness' (think the Stones at Compass Point) is here brilliantly offset by quality orchestration. Equally comparable to Sleaford Mods' savage lo-fi (see Letter Bomb; while Jason Williamson even appears on Almond Milk) and Leonard Cohen's fatalist poetry, *Prince Of Tears* is an outright triumph.

*Andrew Perry*

## Hiss Golden Messenger

★★★

### Hallelujah Anyhow

MERGE. CD/DL/LP

**Speedy turnaround for new Americana hero's latest.**

As befits a man who fits the model of the perpetually moving country musician, MC Taylor hasn't let the grass grow under his feet: *Hallelujah Anyhow* appears less than a year after the release of the Durham, North Carolina native's *Heart Like A Levee*, a one-two punch that vividly emphasises the on-the-road roll that's part of his strengthening reputation as Americana flame-keeper. There's plenty of gravel and grit embedded in these increasingly robust songs, the mood swinging between defiant facing-downs of darkness (When The Wall Comes Down, the college-rock I Am The Song) and folk fragility (Caledonia, My Love). Music this closely knitted to the past, however, needs to catch a little of its own light, and while Jenny Of The Roses and Jaw have a rich tobacco patina of time, wisdom and Woodstock smoke, *Hallelujah Anyhow* needs a shade more definition to cut through the reassuring vintage fug.

*Victoria Segal*

Baxter Dury: chip off the old Blockhead.

TEXAS JOE'S BBQ
STREET FAIR WEEKENDER
REGGAE CHOIR
STREET FOOD

"This is my last chance to do anything": Liam Gallagher, not about to mess up.

# I should solo!

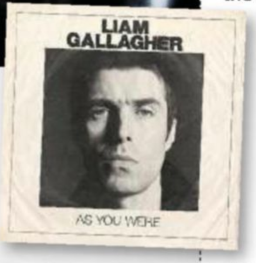
Oasis Tigger bounces back in style. By Andrew Perry.

**Liam Gallagher**

★★★★

As You Were

WARNER BROS. CD/DL/LP



FOR THE first time in 24 years, Liam Gallagher is an underdog again. Ever since Oasis's game-changing first two albums in the mid '90s, all this most naturally gifted of rock singers has known is life on a pedestal. The scathing reception for a succession of less exciting Oasis records saw him gradually toppled, and when he resurfaced in Beady Eye (the same band, minus big bro/songsmith Noel) he was in a no-win situation: their two albums were an improvement, but got panned anyway.

After Beady Eye ignominiously dissolved, a paternity suit and his consequent divorce from second wife Nicole Appleton left him properly sprawling on the canvas.

Down and out for three years, his silence was broken earlier this year, with news he was working on what sounded like a heavily A&R'd solo outing, with big-shot pop songwriters including Greg Kurstin, best known for Adele's Hello, and Andrew Wyatt, singer with Sweden's Miike Snow but also a jobbing writer for, among others, Florence + The Machine and Flume.

From the swaggering leader of British rock's last gang in town, this didn't sound too promising. Knives are doubtless being sharpened for *As You Were*, but, from its hilariously superior title down, it's by some stretch the best Liam-fronted outing in two decades. It rarely feels souped-up, instead couching a genuinely iconic voice amid strong material, through which he sings, soulfully and directly, about his rollercoaster life.

The upbeat rockers certainly pull no punches: the thundering You Better Run, You Better Hide takes a swing at his elder sibling ("gonna steal your thunder", etc), while the gospel-tinged Wall Of Glass and JAMC-style blues-riffin' glam stomper Greedy Soul has its beady eye trained on similar targets, ("you got your kiss and tell/I hope you go to hell").

Though Gallagher himself is loath to confirm specifics, such lyrical transparency is a much better fit for the straight-talking Liam we all know, than the hazy psychedelia Noel was writing for him in late-period Oasis. Better still, some gentler tunes reveal his more vulnerable side. The Masterplan-like Bold is *As You Were*'s spiritual anthem, with its urgent quest to "sing my song, shake off these blues". Bold and Chinatown (about nocturnal runnings with new squeeze Debbie) elicit a different kind of singing from Gallagher – a dreamier, higher-pitched keening; think Paul Weller circa *All Mod Cons*.

This softer dimension reaches its zenith on For What It's Worth, whose mighty, scarf-waving chorus echoes Don't Look Back In Anger. Here, Liam serves up a real first – an apology, to Nicole, his kids, his mum, maybe even You Know Who. "Sometimes we lose our way," he yowls, to cap this rousing comeback. Noel's third solo venture is due next month. Over to you, Chief.

## "Pandora's box is wide open!"

Liam Gallagher talks to Andrew Perry.

**How did you end up with hot songwriter *du jour* Greg Kurstin?**

"When I was signing to Warners, they said, 'Look, how many fucking songs have you got?' I said, At the moment, it's two – Bold and When I'm In Need. 'Haven't you got any more?' No, man. So they signed us off them two songs, and next thing I was flying out to his house in Los Angeles – never met him, didn't know much about him. Andrew Wyatt was there – them two went to school but they'd never wrote together."

**How did it work practically between you?**

"[Kurstin] would be doing the melody and the words, to Wall Of Glass, and Paper Crown, and I was just sort of sitting there, going, Right, I'm not having that bit, play it a bit more like this, dadada – changing a few words, a bit of the phrasing. I thought he'd be a bit of a pain in the arse, but it was pretty easy, man."

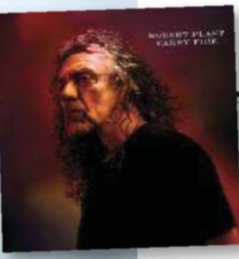
**How are you acclimatising to being a solo artiste?**

"It still feels a bit odd when you've got your big fucking name on a backdrop. Like I've said before, this is not my bag, being solo. I've heard Noel go, 'Oh, this is forced upon me' – his solo career. That's bollocks, this has been forced upon *me*. I'd do an Oasis reunion for a fiver – or nish! – but he's not interested. So this is my last chance to do anything. I'm not gonna start a band again where it's always compared to Oasis, like Beady Eye were. No point."

**So it feels different?**

"When you're in a band, you just wanna be the fucking Stones and The Beatles – or the bands I've been in did, anyway. So you're kind of stuck in that one certain way, which obviously becomes retro, which is not good. So now, with different people, the genie's out of the bottle, Pandora's box is wide open. There's definitely lots of different flavours going on, because it's coming from different people. Which is interesting, I think."

Robert Plant: space shifter who recognises no borders.



# No borders

Plant gets political on his second album with The Sensational Space Shifters. By Jim Farber.

## Robert Plant

★★★

### Carry Fire

NONESUCH. CD/DL/LP

BORDERS AND boundaries occupy the mind of Robert Plant on his latest foray. Divisions act as his enemy, whether they be between nations or among genres. Lyrically, that plays out in subjects like colonialism, slavery, and nationalism, as well as the gap between life and death. Musically, it entails erasing the line between sounds from Appalachia and Albania, or Mali and Memphis for that matter.

This approach continues the one Plant adopted on his last album, 2012's *Lullaby And… The Ceaseless Roar*. *Carry Fire* features the same band, The Sensational Space Shifters and, again, credits the writing to the collective of Plant, string polymaths Justin Adams and Liam Tyson, keyboard innovator John Baggott and bassist Dave Smith. Gone from the equation is the Shifters' sole African member, Juldeh Camara, a Gambia griot who took his ritti with him. Listeners seeking relief from the common dominance of guitar, bass and drums shouldn't fret; there's generous space carved out for djembe, bendir drums and oud here.

The repetition in Plant's two most recent works breaks a pattern of the past decade. Over that time, his albums have displayed an encouraging restlessness, lurching from his incantatory band Strange Sensation to his American gothic collaboration with Alison Krauss to his neo-psychedelic group Band Of Joy, to the Shifters. If he's idling this time, he makes up for it with music that's nuanced and varied enough to make the tarry worthwhile.

In The May Queen, Baggott's synthetic loops goose an American blues riff, while an African drum holds a solemn pace. In the title track, a fiercely plucked oud ricochets off a soaring mix of classical cello and viola. Like many of Plant's recent projects, a layer of echo blankets the mix, making his vocals shimmer and the beats oscillate. The album's most commercial (read: Zeppelinesque) track, Bones Of Saints, casts a metal riff over folk rock filigrees that faintly echo The Battle Of Evermore.

Again, like last time, love figures big, though here it's shadowed by mortality. For *Carry Fire*, Plant has written Lion In Winter love songs. They're last grasps at passion, whether they be for a literal romance or merely for a sustained sense of engagement. The fresh accent on politics shows in New World, which addresses white domination, and Carving Up The World Again, which connects contemporary populism to its manifestations throughout history. They're trendy topics these days, but the music Plant and his band marries them to gives the subjects an individual spin. Better, the band's holistic approach translates the no-borders theme into rousing sound.

## Melanie De Biasio

★★★★

### Lilies

PLAY IT AGAIN SAM. CD/DL/LP

**Belgium's boundary-breaker perfects the goth-jazz crossover.**

Melanie De Biasio's third album follows last year's *Blackened Cities*, a release that was dedicated to a single 25-minute composition. Though *Lilies* features nine songs, its second track, Gold Junkies, is what she was writing when *Blackened Cities* evolved: working through the song's themes produced the longer piece. But now its essence has been distilled and De Biasio watchers will find much that's familiar in *Lilies*' offsetting of Nina Simone-esque haziness, a trip-hop pulse, sparse arrangements and a shape-shifting abstraction suggesting *Laughing Stock*-era Talk Talk. But De Biasio is now about the whole rather than jumping-off points. Whether it's the just-about solo voice showcase Sitting In The Stairwell, the graceful yet tense flow of the rolling Afro Blue or the ominous All My Worlds, *Lilies* is an album which the solo Siouxsie Sioux would have been proud to record.

*Kieron Tyler*

## Ben Frost

★★★

### The Centre Cannot Hold

MUTE. CD/DL/LP

**"An exercise in restraint, endurance and chromatic saturation."**

Australia-born, Reykjavik-based Ben Frost is a composer whose previous works have included the Stanislaw Lem/Tarkovsky-inspired *Music For Solaris* and the score for Icelandic drama The Deep, but this Steve Albini-produced outing – as much artwork as album per se – is something else again. Largely comprised of ominous, compelling yet harrowing electronica 'happenings' offset with small pockets of ambience and melody, it's music with a definite animalistic presence, Frost and Albini wrestling with its Frankensteinian bent for malevolent independence. If listening to Trauma Theory is akin to being assailed by a giant wasp and A Sharp Blow In Passing screams something wicked this way comes, A Single Hellfire Missile Costs $100,000 offers fleeting ambient respite before Eurydice's Heel kicks you in the stomach, resuming the assault. The overall effect is affecting and exhausting, the listener feeling queasy and spent.

*James McNair*

## Wolf Parade

★★★★

### Cry Cry Cry

SUB POP. CD/DL/LP/MC

**Band enlist Sleater-Kinney producer John Goodmanson for first LP in seven years.**

The insistent, even impatient, rhythms that propel most songs on Wolf Parade's fourth album are some measure of hope. They suggest there's some place the synth-rock band is trying to get, and that there is some place worth reaching. "Let morning come," they say on Incantation. There is no shortage of things to run from on *Cry Cry Cry*. Songs note the losses of Cohen and Bowie, along with the rise of Trump. On the Cars-y You're Dreaming, songwriter Dan Boeckner seems to wonder if we've surrendered the instinct to survive: "A billion screens they move so fast – but that's not life." Perhaps we will persist. "Rage against the night," the band counsel on the opening Lazarus Online; while in the closer King Of Piss And Paper, they ask, "How can we not sing about love?" But not a thing is guaranteed.

*Chris Nelson*

## The Darkness

★★★★

### Pinewood Smile

COOKING VINYL. CD/DL/LP

**Lowestoft's panto-rockers return to top form.**

Rhyming "Barbara" with "candelabra", and lambasting the rail commuter's nemesis on the typically preposterous Southern Trains, The Darkness have regained much of the joy, silliness and virtuosic songcraft that made their 2003 debut *Permission To Land* such fun. Their new secret weapon is Rufus 'Tiger' Taylor, drumming son of Queen's Roger Taylor, who proves suitably majestic on the early Queen-like Japanese Prisoner Of Love, and shares two lead vocals here. Among the other highlights are Stampede Of Love, two-parts spoof metallers Steel Panther to one-part Benny Hill, and Lay Down With Me, Barbara, which, with its major seventh chords and phased guitar solo, wears its '70s Thin Lizzy badge prominently. "We are only bubble and squeak in the frying pan of life," sings Justin Hawkins elsewhere on Why Don't The Beautiful Cry? Such brazenly daft credos remain part of his band's unique charm.

*James McNair*

## Broen

★★★

### I ♥ Art

BELLA UNION. **CD/DL/LP**

**Musically savvy Norwegian quintet's first album of precision-made pop.**

The title of the debut album from the Trondheim-based quintet Broen nails it. The art-pop vehicle of former students of a high-end Norwegian jazz conservatory disassembles pop and reconstructs it. Their name translates as 'bridge' (sharing it with the Danish/Swedish TV programme is a coincidence) which is what the dot-connecting Broen are. Plucking from bloopy acid house, hip-hop, funk, fusion jazz and DayGlo dance-pop as it morphed into trip-hop (think Neneh Cherry) while sporting a tuba player, their fidgetiness coalesces when favouring the song over its building blocks. Stevie Wonder-esque flourishes and a downbeat, late-night melody posit You (Detective) as a lost early-'80s contender for TV's Soul Train. Ending on a high with the pulsing, yearning Water Is My Mirror shows Broen are more than an exercise in musical bricolage.

*Kieron Tyler*

## L.A. Witch

★★★★

### L.A. Witch

SUICIDE SQUEEZE. **CD/DL/LP**

**Sassily rockin' girl-group noir from the city of angels.**

Sometimes a young group taking their baby steps on record is better than any 'mature' work laboured over for years. Such is the case with this debut from a Californian all-girl trio who say they never even thought they'd get to make an LP. Their aesthetic worldview is narrow, but boy, do they nail it: in Sade Sanchez's sourpuss singing and reverb-saturated twangin', here is the psychotic desert-blues edge in Mazzy Star's sound, which pallid wannabes like Beach House left behind. Think Hope Sandoval drawling Ghost On The Highway, or JAMC's Just Like Honey, or the early Cramps with a deadpan Elvira singing. Flagship tune Kill My Baby Tonight has a thrilling cartoon malevolence, while Untitled and Good Guys up the tempo with Vivian Girls-ish punky ramalama. At just 32 minutes, *L.A. Witch* is brief, ultra-basic, not particularly varied and all the better for it.

*Andrew Perry*

**L.A. Witch: thrilling cartoon malevolence.**

## Gregg Allman

★★★★

### Southern Blood

DECCA. **CD/DL/LP**

**A powerful goodbye from the last Allman blood brother.**

"I hope you're haunted by the music of my soul when I'm gone," sings Gregg Allman on My Only True Friend, the opening track of this posthumous album and the only one he had a hand in writing (with Scott Sharrard). Song and album are crafted as a final love letter to family, friends and fans – son Devon calls it "our father's last statement." Produced by Don Was with songwriting credits by Dylan, Jackson Browne, Garcia/Hunter, Willie Dixon, Spooner Oldham/Dan Penn, Tim Buckley/Larry Beckett and Lowell George – the finest of Allman's era are represented. Gregg's vocal technique was remarkably intact despite his illness, as was his trademark ability to convey love, honesty, anguish. Given his passing, it's indeed a haunting collection. Note to Gregg, wherever you are: mission accomplished.

*Michael Simmons*

## Margo Price

★★★★

### All American Made

THIRD MAN. **CD/DL/LP**

**Rapid-fire follow-up to 2016's debut *Midwest Farmer's Daughter.***

Recorded at Sam Phillips' establishment in Memphis with an ample cast that comes on like a latter-day Nashville A-Team, *All American Made* oozes class and pedigree. "Everything I say/Somebody says they said it first", sings Price on the politically-charged title track, but these songs penned with husband/guitar foil Jeremy Ivey are full of inventive pay-offs and earthy storylines, Price channelling her antecedents, yet treading fresh ground. If Cocaine Cowboys packs something of the white, rodeo funk of Glen Campbell's take on Southern Nights, and the country-soul groove of A Little Pain is just perfect, Learning To Lose, a duet with Willie Nelson, is a tad hamstrung by an ungainly tangle of vocals. Even it, though, is redeemed by its gorgeously subtle ending, and *All American Made* maintains Price's status as honky-tonk's most compelling new flame.

*James McNair*

## The Barr Brothers

★★★

### Queens Of The Breakers

SECRET CITY. **CD/DL/LP**

**North American alliance's ode to youth, parenthood and the gaps between.**

Andrew (drums) and Brad (guitar) Barr, Rhode Islanders who decamped to Montreal after a Leonard Cohen concert in 2003, play in improv-rockers The Slip while saving songs for themselves. The Barr Brothers includes harpist Sarah Pagé, providing a delicate undertow to the boys' meticulous dream-weaving, Brad favouring slide and Andrew a set of supple rhythmic patterns that ensure the momentum sways. Their third album keeps an open mind: Song That I Heard is Simon & Garfunkel-fragile, Maybe Someday is gristlier, with wheezy harmonica and stubby guitar, Kompromat is swarthier folk-blues and other passages echo past collaborations with Mali musicians. There are equally amounts melancholia and contentment combined in the title track's memory of teenage kicks, dressing in drag to provoke the tourists on Rhode Island, in light of both Barrs becoming dads since 2014's *Sleeping Operator* album: time passes, and life goes on.

*Martin Aston*

# AMERICANA

### BY SYLVIE SIMMONS

## Ray Wylie Hubbard

★★★★

### Tell The Devil I'm Getting There As Fast As I Can

BORDELLO/THIRTY TIGERS. **CD/DL**

**Lucinda Williams, Patty Griffin, Eric Church guest on septuagenarian's seventeenth album.**

THE CRAGGY Oklahoma-born Texan's been busy these last two years. A very fine album, *The Ruffian's Misfortune*, followed by a wry, wise autobiography (A Life… Well, Lived) and now these 11 new songs. Stripped-down opener God Looked Around, which sounds like a prison field song, finds Hubbard rewriting the Creation story. The sparse blues lingers for a handful of songs – some featuring call-outs to legends like Leadbelly, Big Joe Williams, Charlie Musselwhite – before settling into a swampy bad-ass groove Tony Joe White would feel right at home with. But it wouldn't be a Ray Wylie album without an anthem and the title track is a good one – like a young Stones riffing on Dylan's Knockin' On Heaven's Door in an arena. Other highlights: Spider, Snaker & Little Sun and psychedelicana The Rebellious Sons.

## ALSO RELEASED

## Rusty Young

★★★★

### Waitin' For The Sun

BLUE ÉLAN. **CD/DL/LP**

For 49 years Young has fronted Poco, the West Coast country rock band that was the template for the Eagles, with sweet harmonies, a smooth, laid-back sound and well-constructed songs. Which could describe Young's solo debut. Except, being half-a-century older, the feeling is more sunset and bittersweet. Highlights: ballads Waitin' For The Sun and Innocent Moon; backporchy Gonna Let The Rain; and Neil Young-esque Hey There.

## Slaid Cleaves

★★★★

### Ghost On The Car Radio

PROPER. **CD/DL/LP**

Cleaves is still waving a spear for small town Americans consigned to the scrap heap like the old jalopy in Junkyard – one of two paeans to cars and one of a number of slow, spare, sentimental songs. Most tell stories about blue collar men in rusting towns wanting it to be like the old days – no, he doesn't mention Trump. The mood can get morose, but there's a bunch of fine songs, including So Good To Me and The Old Guard.

## Sammy Brue

★★★★

### I Am Nice

NEW WEST. **CD/DL/LP**

Brue signed to New West at the age of 15, having already released two EPs. Impressive, and so is this album, with songs ranging from troubadour folk (I Know; Once A Lover) to unashamedly dreamy '60s pop balladry (Was I The Only One; I Never Said). Just the right blend of innocence and maturity, well-produced by Civil Wars' John Paul White and Alabama Shakes' Ben Tanner.

## Sam Amidon

★★★

### The Following Mountain

NONESUCH. **CD/DL/LP**

Amidon's study of American folk music has taken him down some twisting paths since his Irish fiddle instrumental debut 16 years ago – his high lonesome cover of Mariah Carey's Shake It Off, for instance. These new songs are all originals. Some have the skewed beauty of his last album (Fortune; Another Story Told) but many more morph into experimental dreamscapes and feverish jazz (12-minute April, featuring Milford Graves and Bill Frisell). Not an easy listen, but admirable. *SS*

"What could be better than love?" St. Vincent wants answers.

Nedda Afsari

# High anxiety

Heartache and nihilism meet sonic trickery in Annie Clark's troubled fifth. By Tom Doyle.

## St. Vincent

★★★★

Masseduction

CAROLINE INTERNATIONAL. CD/DL/LP

MUCH HAS happened to Annie Clark since her eponymous, Grammy-winning fourth album was released in 2014. Firstly, she's become a star, this year fronting an advertising campaign for Tiffany. Secondly, she's become a source of interest for the tabloids and the paparazzi, thanks to her relationships with Cara Delevingne and Kristen Stewart. These developments have peeled back a layer or two of mystery from the previously unknowable Clark. But if we can now imagine the faces in the scenes of break-up songs here such as New York and Los Ageless, *Masseduction* is a revelation in terms of its raw and sometimes brutal emotional honesty.

There's an air of sensory overload and panic circulating around these songs that is evident from opener Hang On Me, with its black, morbid thoughts of crashing taxis and planes and Clark's admission, "I know you hate my hysterics", played out over a backing track that is Massive Attack's Teardrop by way of Lorde (whose *Melodrama* co-producer, Jack Antonoff, reprises that role here). Sex, meanwhile, often sounds like a hassle or dangerous: in the reluctant dress-up bedroom games of the Prince-ly Savior, or in the cool-freeze electropop title track, where the hook "I can't turn off what turns me on" sounds like a psychosis sonically translated by Clark's Frippertronics-for-the-digital-age guitars.

That's not to say *Masseduction* is always high on anxiety. There are many moments of beauty, as when the demented nursery rhyme verses of the jerkily groovesome Pills ("Pills to fuck/Pills to eat/Pills pills pills down the kitchen sink") gives way to a dreamy coda throwing its arms around "villains" and "killers" and the wretched and wasted. Similarly, the semi-detached state of gorgeous ballad Slow Disco has Clark gratefully slipping away from a party before addressing "the fool in the mirror". And Prince Johnny from *St. Vincent* is back in the affecting piano lament Happy Birthday, Johnny, which reveals the pair's bond to be one of blood, though the titular character (whether real or fictional) is now on the skids and bumming money from his famous sister.

But even in its upbeat moments, *Masseduction* is less euphoric, more manic, with the initially overblown-sounding '80s disco-rock of Young Lover masking a story of a dangerous pill-popping partner. By the end, you worry for Clark, or at least the narrator of creepily nihilistic closer Smoking Section, stepping to the edge of her roof to consider jumping "just to punish you", before a positive flash through her troubled mind decides "what could be better than love". It's this mix of irrational thought and lightning bolt revelation with reliably bleeding-edge musical invention that keeps us listening throughout this dark, intense and utterly compelling record.

LIZZ WRIGHT
GRACE

### Lizz Wright

★★★★

Grace

VERVE. CD/DL/LP

**Georgia singer's superb sixth album, helmed by Joe Henry.**

Since impressing with her jazz-infused debut album *Salt*, in 2003, 37-year-old Wright has blossomed into an accomplished singer/songwriter whose own distinctive style is a hard-to-pigeonhole amalgam of organic folk and gospel flavours. Unlike some church-reared American singers, Wright doesn't wail and holler in a histrionic fashion – rather, her approach is a gentle, subtle one where her honey-drizzled contralto voice glows with a languorous, yearning soulfulness. Here, Joe Henry's understated, pitch-perfect old school production allows her to shine on a 10-track set that includes indelible versions of tunes by Bob Dylan, Allen Toussaint, k.d. lang, and Ray Charles. Though there are several standouts, such as a haunting reconfiguration of Rose Cousins' title song, the material and performances here are uniformly strong, affirming that Wright is now a recording artist of significant stature.

*Charles Waring*

### Carla Bruni

★★★

French Touch

DECCA. CD/DL/LP

**Not French touch as in dance music but elegant collection of songs to fall in love to.**

Although yet another rendering of Perfect Day is unnecessary, Carla Bruni's first album since stepping down as France's First Lady tackles Lou Reed's over-exposed chestnut. Other well-worn songs on this intermittently orchestrated set of jazzy, shuffling, Left Bank-style makeovers include Love Letters, Moon River and Stand By Your Man. Edginess, to a degree, comes from similarly arranged takes of AC/DC's Highway To Hell, The Clash's Jimmy Jazz and Depeche Mode's Enjoy The Silence. *French Touch* comprises songs which, she attests, have inspired love at first sight. While tempting to read domestic meanings into, say, the choice of Abba's The Winner Takes It All, following 2013's mostly self-composed *Little French Songs* with a covers collection suggests an artistic marking of time. However, *French Touch* unfolds as a warm, stylish tribute to great songs from one of continental Europe's most affecting voices.

*Kieron Tyler*

### Van Morrison

★★★

Roll With The Punches

EXILE/CAROLINE. CD/DL/LP

**Thirty-seventh solo LP finds new twists in common covers.**

roll with the punches
VAN MORRISON

Van Morrison has called his latest album "performance oriented," ie 10 of the 15 tracks are covers of blues and soul standards. There's T-Bone Walker's Stormy Monday, Bo Diddley's Ride On Josephine, and an umpteenth run at Sam Cooke's Bring It On Home To Me. Luckily, few singers bring as much invention to their performances as Morrison. His take on the Cooke classic fiddles with the melody and exaggerates the syllables, giving the song a whole new cadence. Morrison has a fine rapport with his guest stars, like singer Chris Farlowe, heard on three tracks, and Jeff Beck, whose lead on Ordinary People is stunning. Morrison further freshens the covers by thematically linking them with originals: his snarling take on Little Walter's Mean Old World makes a great mate for his own complaint, Too Much Trouble. His third album in as many years, while not among his most consequential, proves that, at 71, Morrison can still perform with gusto.

*Jim Farber*

### Torres

★★★

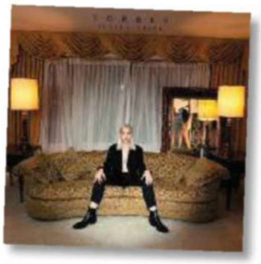
Three Futures

4AD. CD/DL/LP

**Bracing third from Georgia-born singer-songwriter.**

There is a lot of awkwardness around the third album from Mackenzie Scott, the fierce presence behind Torres: there's the vocal astringency, pitched between Siouxsie Sioux and P.J. Harvey, occasionally stilted lyrics ("my eyes a trinity divided"), and the sense these songs lay bare one of the most cataclysmic "we need to talk" conversations in history. Domestic images of laundry-folding and meet-the-parents summits rub up against the rawer language of physical need: muscle-mass guitars flexing on Righteous Woman, or the sleepy pulse of To Be Given A Body. Electro-goth cautionary tale Helen In The Woods shows Scott and producer Rob Ellis at their wildest, but with its oddly flattened curves and shiny electronic detailing, this record prioritises direct impact over moody mystique. If *Three Futures* lacks depth, then, it's only because everything inside has been dragged out, up to the surface, into the light.

*Victoria Segal*



## Wiki

★★★

### No Mountains In Manhattan

XL CD/DL/LP

**Ratking member's first solo record oozes New York charm and grit.**

As a key member of the New York hip-hop collective, Ratking, Wiki's own debut largely justifies the move to solo artist. *No Mountains In Manhattan* is filled with an eclectic mix of soulful samples, one of which, second track Mayor, wryly reflects on the rise of the rapper's turbulent career and takes you straight into the bedroom studios of those young NYC rappers striving for better things: "I got a hot head but I'm staying cold/I ain't a prayer but the Mayor though." Following on is Pretty Bull, the single which marked his XL Recordings debut. Baby Girl follows suit; a fresh take on timeless '90s hip-hop that places him credibly in the game. Guest spots from Ghostface Killah and Your Old Droog add to what is already a record full of NYC-centric nostalgia.

*Felicity Grant*

## Colleen

★★★

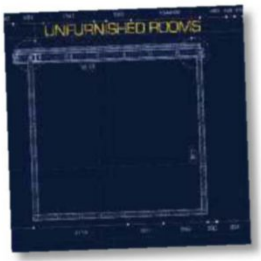
### A Flame My Love, A Frequency

THRILL JOCKEY CD/DL/LP

**Dauntless French experimenter returns, in lo-fi electronic guise.**

An abstract contemplation of mortality, provoked by her proximity to the 2015 Paris terrorist attacks, Cécile Schott's sixth album as Colleen abandons her signature baroque viola da gamba in favour of primitive, evanescent electronics: the eight micro-synth-propelled essays are pitched equidistant between Krautrock, minimalism and dub. At its best – the *Another Green World*-recalling Winter Dawn, the hymnal, Nico-like title track – this is ethereal, often beautiful art music. The equally arresting Separating – a burbling alloy of Arthur Russell's *World Of Echo* and Cluster's *Zuckerzeit*, dotted with haiku-like vocals – parlaying the theme of existential frailty most explicitly, even if its lengthy coda, essentially the sound of delay loops being switched on and off, is less than succinct. For the most part, this is another absorbing chapter in Schott's one-woman sonic odyssey, and where her protean creative compass will take her next is intriguing.

*David Sheppard*



## Blancmange

★★★★

### Unfurnished Rooms

BLANC CHECK CD/DL/LP

**Revived '80s synth-pop outlier continues interior redesign.**

"You look so well in your online profile," sings Neil Arthur on Don't Get Me Wrong, the guttering torch song closing *Unfurnished Rooms*. That's the mood suffusing this record: semi-detached, wistful, touched by computer-age unease. This is Arthur's fifth album since Blancmange's reactivation six years ago – co-pilot Stephen Luscombe stepped back after 2011's *Blanc Burn* – and there's no sign his rebooted muse is fading. Arthur's gift with a metaphor unfolds on Unfurnished Rooms' electro-pop psychodrama – part budget Carmina Burana, part Location Location Location – or fractured vignette We Are The Chemicals, which opens "There's been a chemical spillage on a trading estate in Altrincham." Anna Dine's Sisters Of Mercy glower is more explicitly gothic, while John Grant offers a modern stylistic match by backing Don't Get Me Wrong. Yet this is ultimately a singular, genuinely eccentric record, opening up hidden emotional staircases and secret passages all over the place.

*Victoria Segal*

Hoopla! Matias Aguayo's carnival atmosphere.

Marcelo Setton

## Matias Aguayo & The Desdemonas

★★★★

### Sofarnopolis

CRAMMED DISCS. CD/DL/LP

**Minimal techno dreamer fantasises fictional city on post-electronic rock foray.**

Matias Aguayo's spirit of adventure has taken him far beyond the confines of minimal techno. The Chilean-born, German-based musician's voracious musical appetites and globe-trotting ways have spun him in ever-widening directions, whether dabbling with kindred experimentalists Battles or hosting impromptu street parties. An unbridled carnival atmosphere pervades Aguayo's latest, a computer-free full-band double album that set his malleable multi-lingual tones in a range of different roles that embrace perverse punk-rap, squealing jazz and rumbling psychedelia over The Desdemonas' woofer-rattling mishmash of tropicália, electronica, post-punk and dub. While Aguayo's roaming penchant for oddball thrills and wide-eyed eclecticism made 2013's *The Visitor* an instant keeper, the more rarefied terrain of *Sofarnopolis* ultimately cuts deeper, making falling through its rabbit hole seem a surreptitious surprise.

*Andy Cowan*

## John Foxx And The Maths

★★★

### The Machine

METAMATIC. CD/DL/LP

**The pioneering synth maven is inspired by literature first visited in his youth.**

John Foxx first read E.M. Forster's prescient short story The Machine Stops in 1964. In it, an underground-dwelling humanity was reliant on an all-providing machine for their needs. *The Machine* uses the music composed by him and Maths' partner Benge for a recent York Theatre Royal staging of the story but reconfigures it to flow over an album. Not a soundtrack as such, this is an entity in its own right. Mood-pieces in keeping with the ambience of Foxx's *Cathedral Oceans* series dovetail with glacial compositions suggesting the impressionistic side of his debut solo album, 1980's *Metamatic*. Fully analogue instrumentation fosters the impression of these as recordings from before the digital era, as do an extraordinary, ethereal guest vocal from (the previously Foxx-covering) Elizabeth Bernholz AKA Gazelle Twin and the bold artwork of Bowie-favoured designer Jonathan Barnbrook.

*Kieron Tyler*

# ELECTRONIC

BY STEPHEN WORTHY

## FIO presents Veranda Culture

★★★★

### Veranda Culture

VERANDA CULTURE. CD/DL/LP

**Deep house-flavoured ambient from mellow Melburnian.**

AT THE turn of the decade, still barely out of his teens, Melbourne's Griffin James – as Francis Inferno Orchestra – was a star on his hometown's fecund house scene. But James, now resident in Berlin, feeds off the energy of changing vistas. For *Veranda Culture*, he uses proof points from his dancefloor material, great swells of synthetic chords especially, to fashion sensual, beatless house and glittery Balearica. Wonky gamelan fuses with exotic flute on opener New Worlds; Met Morte is a sunset blast down the Great Ocean Road, studded with heavy guitar reverb, twinkling wind chimes and grand synth chords. Palmerston is an oddity, but a bewitching one. Its first six minutes are little more than a digital pulse reminiscent of didgeridoo drone. Then, abruptly switching tack, the music morphs into an Eno-like ambient hymn. An album of raw beauty and wonderment.

## ALSO RELEASED

## Valiska

★★★

### On Pause

TROUBLE IN UTOPIA DL/LP

Canadian-based experimental artist Valiska's name means 'suitcase' in his native Polish. That's appropriate, as the meditative vignettes he creates interpret his journey through a period of loss. Deploying simple tape loops, his ethereal voice and a trusty Moog, these grainy reflections echo Tim Hecker's soundscapes or Boards Of Canada's melancholic warmth.

## Aris Kindt

★★★★

### Swann & Odette

KINGDOMS. DL/LP

Francis Harris's primary MO – ruminative deep house – has cemented his reputation as one of electronica's most alluring talents. For Aris Kindt, he teams up with guitarist and modular synth exponent Gabe Hedrick for an album of gossamer-light, oil tanker-speed ambient, augmented by skirls of shoegazey reverb. This is an album that flutters between space and intricate melody, noise and serenity.

## DJ Python

★★★★

### Dulce Compañia

INCIENSO. DL/LP

The jerky two-bar 'dembow beat' that underpins the Latin American dancehall fusion reggaeton seems an unlikely bedfellow for the smooth stylings of deep house. But DJ Python's unique hybrid sound is incredibly moreish. Folding ambient breakbeats, dub and psych into the mix, the Brooklynite here fashions music of subtle beauty.

## Lindstrøm

★★★★

### It's Alright Between Us As It Is

SMALLTOWN SUPERSOUND. CD/DL/LP

The latest expedition from Hans-Peter Lindstrøm – erstwhile Todd Rundgren collaborator and Nordic disco pioneer – finds the Stavanger native matching more vocals to his grandiose productions. If Shinin dives into throbbing trancey vocal house, it's counterbalanced by Bungl (Like A Ghost), as Lindstrøm's compatriot Jenny Hval lends her haunting, whispered vocal to his twisted, dark disco. *SW*

## Tusks

★★★★

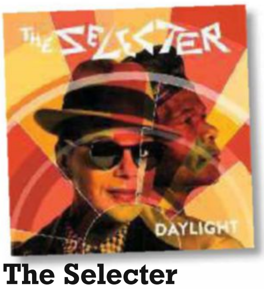
### Dissolve

ONE LITTLE INDIAN. CD/DL/LP

**Debut album from hotly-tipped multi-instrumentalist.**

There's something elemental here, as if *Dissolve*'s produced by unearthly beings who can still have their hearts shattered. Actually, Tusks is Emily Underhill, whose eerie voice storms or falls against glacial, ambient soundscapes punctuated with reverberated guitar plunges. We're talking London Grammar, a touch of The xx, plus something still resident on Alpha Centauri. For You begins with slow clicking, like stalactites snapping in the snowy expanse; from somewhere the haunted, Julianna Barwick-style voice emerges, soaring through cathedrals of sound. False is a dubby rock-out, almost Everything But The Girl's Missing, but bitter; 1807 takes things into Game Of Thrones territory, drips echoing into pools and a vocal so gothically charged you could be listening to This Mortal Coil's *Filigree & Shadow*. Trippy closer London Thunder is a brutal beauty: "It's over/I'm older/London thunder, the sound of sirens." Pulsing, hazy, addictive.

*Glyn Brown*



## The Selecter

★★★★

### Daylight

DMF MUSIC. CD/DL/LP

**2 Tone veterans prove their resurgent relevance with potent 12th album.**

The Selecter, centred around original band leaders Pauline Black and Arthur 'Gaps' Hendrickson, haven't sounded so energised since their 1979 debut, *Too Much Pressure*. Back then, they soundscaped the UK black experience as a part of the 2 Tone explosion, and for Black the motivation to record remains the same today: "An artist has a duty," she says, "to reflect on the times in which they live." Their twelfth album, then, finds them documenting a divided country once again. "You threw me under a bus," she sings over an infectious reggae skank on album opener Frontline, her reflection on the outcome of the Brexit vote. Hope is on hand, though, in Things Fall Apart, a horns-driven dub inspired by author Chinua Achebe, and Pass The Power, which rejoices in the rise of a newly politicised youth.

*Lois Wilson*

Dean Chalkley

The Selecter's Pauline Black and 'Gaps': still reflecting the times we live in.

## Gary Numan

★★★★

### Savage (Songs From A Broken World)

BMG. CD/DL/LP

**Electronic pioneer sets his twenty-first studio outing in a post-apocalyptic future.**

Once so prolific he recorded three Number 1 albums in 16 months, Gary Numan has written slower but better since he clawed back into unlikely contention. With the personal dramas that fuelled 2013's *Splinter* seemingly resolved, he looks outwards on *Savage* to a scorched future Earth that bears the intractable scars of manmade global warming. While his singular voice slashes through the gloom, Numan and producer Ade Fenton give the full futuristic kitchen sink to their wind-swept dystopian technoscape: howling glitches, siren Moogs, stentorian strings, Arabic wailing and crunching guitar riffs designed for maximum on-stage headbang. It may be as conceptually bleak and unremitting as John Wyndham's The Chrysalids or Cormac McCarthy's The Road, but like all Numan's greatest work, *Savage* sounds timeless.

*Andy Cowan*

## Bette Smith

★★★★

### Jetlagger

BIG LEGAL MESS. CD/DL

**An incredible debut from the next big-voiced soul sensation out of Brooklyn.**

From Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, Bette Smith was brought up a Seventh Day Adventist, singing gospel from the age of five. She was forbidden to perform the secular songs she'd sneaked a listen to in her teens, but after her choir-director father's death in 2012, she took Otis Redding as her template and started blues shouting and soul rockin' at street fairs and bars. For her debut album, producer Jimbo Mathus took her south, to Water Valley's Dial Back Sound studio in Mississippi. The deep, powerful rasp he captures live aligns her to Tina Turner, Bettye Lavette and Mavis Staples, the latter especially on a passionate cover of The Staple Singers' City In The Sky. I Found Love and the title track, meanwhile, take her out of the church and into the fields; her vocal so raw, it hurts.

*Lois Wilson*

## Brix & The Extricated

★★★

### Part 2

BLANG. CD/DL/LP

**Reunited old soldiers fail to escape the long shadow of The Fall.**

Although Brix Start-Smith claims top billing, the former wife of Mark E is not The Extricated's sole Fall refugee. Bassist Stephen Hanley, his drummer brother Paul and 2004-2006 guitarist Steven Trafford join her in an outfit pointedly named after 1990's first post-Brix Fall album *Extricate*. The only non-alumnus is guitarist Jason Brown. Fittingly, looking back brought this mix'n'match band together – Brix and Stephen Hanley reconnected as he promoted his book The Big Weekend. With time warped by revisiting The Fall's Hotel Bloedel (a sweet recalibration akin to Brix's other band, The Adult Net) and LA (a needlessly straight rendition) and the new Something To Lose's nods to Hip Priest, *Part 2* wins with the garage-guitar-pop of Hollywood and the hard-edged though sugary Teflon. In keeping with Brix's own memoir, *Part 2* suggests that pasts remain unpurged.

*Kieron Tyler*

## King Krule

★★★

### The OOZ

XL. CD/DL/LP

**Third album of wonky jazz mumbles from sui generis twenty-something auteur.**

A BRIT school graduate and BBC Sound Of 2013 nominee, the sheer bloody-mindedness of Archy Marshall's music might surprise unprepared listeners. Self-indulgent and unapologetically confessional (but poetic with it), his songs are murky, post-midnight mumbles, self-pitying diatribes, tales of bad drugs, complicated sex and emotional instability set within wonky, warped, melancholic vignettes recovered from half-remembered dreams. In King Krule's world, nothing sounds quite right – chintzy drum-machines beat out bedroom skanks as Marshall growls like Joe Strummer on The Right Profile (Vidual), suspended Fender Rhodes reveries score sleepy, stoned narratives (Czech One), and on occasion these abstruse elements collude for moments of broken pop (the frank, foul-mouthed stomp of Dum Surfer), though even then everything feels like your speakers have been submerged in a bucket of Benylin. Marshall's irregular flashes of idiosyncratic brilliance impress, though *The OOZ*'s 19 tracks contain many longueurs that merely baffle or bore, so tread carefully.

*Stevie Chick*

## Chris Hillman

★★★★

### Bidin' My Time

ROUNDER. CD/DL/LP

**First new studio album in over a decade; produced by Tom Petty.**

When the frontman is a founding member of The Byrds and musicians on the sessions include former bandmates David Crosby and Roger McGuinn, plus big chunks of The Desert Rose Band and Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers, it's a pretty safe bet that it's going to sound very good. It does. All 12 songs have a warmth and, often as not, a jangle and sweet harmonies. Many of the better songs fall into the I Can't Believe It's Not The Byrds category. There are remakes of *Mr Tambourine Man*'s The Bells Of Rhymney; Here She Comes Again, a Byrds song that only appeared on an Australian live album; New, Old John Robertson; and the Turn! Turn! Turn! B-side, She Don't Care About Time, with a Bach-inspired guitar break. There are also three new Hillman originals, but the cover versions – including The Everly Brothers' Walk Right Back and Petty's Wildflowers – are more engaging.

*Sylvie Simmons*

Amadou & Mariam: sending dispatches from the frontline.

# Upset the rhythm

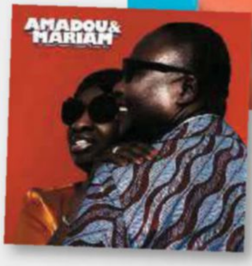
Captivating ninth album of message songs for the dancefloor. By Lois Wilson.

## Amadou & Mariam

★★★★

### La Confusion

BECAUSE MUSIC. CD/DL/LP



BOFOU SAFOU, the opener on the Malian husband-and-wife team's ninth album, is a thrilling electro funk track built on tense, moody synth, terse drums and rousing unison singing. Written by Mariam Doumbia, the song evokes the Nigerian dance pioneer William Onyeabor's late-'70s/early-'80s work – in 2014 Amadou & Mariam joined the Atomic Bomb! Band, a celebrity covers group featuring Damon Albarn and Dev Hynes, which toured Onyeabor's music worldwide – and it captures the very essence of the beat.

But this call to dance has a warning: "When you're born but you do not work/You'll have lived for nothing," Mariam admonishes the Bofou Safou of the song's title – Bofou Safou is a Bambara nickname given to idle young males who'd rather dance than work. "If you do nothing for your father and mother… If you don't help your family… If you do nothing for your own children, you'll have lived for nothing," she adds.

The Malian landscape is much changed since Amadou & Mariam's last album, 2012's *Folila*, an extravagant genre fusion collaboration with Western musician friends including TV On The Radio, Yeah Yeah Yeahs' Nick Zinner and Santigold. Coinciding with the album's release, their homeland was consumed by civil war, the military, frustrated by what they saw as the government's inability to quell the Tuareg rebellion, deposed President Touré just prior to planned elections; there was international condemnation, an African Union suspension and amid the ensuing chaos Tuareg insurgents seized control of the north declaring independence. As chief ambassadors of the Malian beat, Amadou & Mariam felt compelled to soundtrack what was going on.

With producer Adrien Durand of the Bon Voyage Organisation, songwriting credits split equally between the couple – Amadou writes in the morning, Mariam at night – and a largely stripped back approach centred around her warm, soulful vocal embrace, his spirited circular-swirl guitar riffs and the Durand's atmospheric synths, *La Confusion*'s 12 songs, delivered in both French and Bambara, place the duo on the frontline. "Insecurity everywhere/War everywhere/Hate everywhere/Xenophobia everywhere/Crisis everywhere/Unemployment everywhere/Insecurity everywhere," Amadou sings on C'est Chaud [It's Hot], a hypnotic blues funk detailing the plight of the refugees fleeing the fighting in northern Mali. On the title track, where Afropop meets quirky new wave, he sings, "There is confusion, there is illusion, nothing makes sense any more."

What does make sense, though, is this album. Like Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Bob Marley before them, Amadou & Mariam have created a thought-provoking time capsule for future historians; a genuine masterpiece documenting the Malian unrest that is poignant, passionate, and directed equally at the head, feet and heart.

TANZANIA ALBINISM COLLECTIVE
WHITE AFRICAN POWER

## Tanzania Albinism Collective

★★★★

### White African Power

SIX DEGREES. CD/DL

**Globe-trotting producer Ian Brennan's follow-up to last year's Khmer Rouge Survivors field recordings.**

With its 23 short tracks and call-to-arms song titles (This World Has Gone Wrong; They Gossiped When I Was Born), *White African Power* has the same infectious sense of urgency as a great early US hardcore album. But rather than the compressed rage of shaven-headed US suburbanites, this remarkable record distils the angst of the East African albino community, one of the world's most persecuted minorities. It does this not in a gonzo tokenist way, but rather through marshalling the contributions of performers who have been non-musicians by necessity rather than choice into a starkly effective fusion of minimalist instrumentation and haunting melodic fragments which should appeal greatly to fans of Henry Flynt, Moondog and/or Maher Shalal Hash Baz.

*Ben Thompson*

## Miles From Kinshasa

★★★

### Limbo

ONE TIME RECORDINGS. CD/DL/LP

**London newcomer grapples with modern malaise to sparkly rumba-pop.**

Worked up on rudimentary kit in his council estate bedroom, Congo-born south London-based Vivien Kongolo's debut makes a little go a long way. Whether indulging in straight-laced oscillating synth-pop soulfulness (the effortless Overboard, uncomplicated, hooky Psycho) or crafting forward-facing R&B with a real experimental edge (the icy Moog-driven Ivry, Francophile-tinged Fireworks), sundry global influences diffuse through his winsome lo-fi creations. And while the warm synths and choppy funk guitars of Ivry recall Jai Paul's or Ben Khan's intentionally muggy R&B, the pared-back Could We Just Talk Instead? is a confessional reminiscent of Drake, albeit with better vocals. Calculating how MFK conjures such delicate magic from so little is a fool's errand but *Limbo* raises the bar for future shocks across a broader canvas.

*Andy Cowan*

## Courtney Pine

★★★★

### Black Notes From The Deep

FREESTYLE. CD/DL/LP

**UK jazz maven's sixteenth album strikes a soulful note.**

COURTNEY PINE
BLACK NOTES FROM THE DEEP

Astonishingly, 31 years have passed since Courtney Pine blazed into the UK album charts as an unknown jazz tenor saxophonist with his much-heralded 1986 debut, *Journey To The Urge Within*. A lot has happened to Pine since then. He eventually jettisoned the short hair and sharp suits for dreads and a more bohemian look, and musically went from Coltrane-esque post-bop to a broader stylistic cross-pollination that also saw him add clarinet, flute and keyboards to his sonic armoury. This excellent new record encapsulates Pine's eclecticism with its amalgam of cool jazz and sultry R&B flavours. UK soul man Omar collaborates on four cuts, including the funky Rules and a drum'n'bass-inspired version of Herbie Hancock's Butterfly. Elsewhere, Pine shows off his impeccable jazz credentials in a quartet setting, impressing with several beautifully luminous ballads.

*Charles Waring*

## The Weather Station

★★★★

### The Weather Station

PARADISE OF BACHELORS. CD/DL/LP

**Magnetic Canadian story-teller's fourth album puts hand on small of back.**

Since her 2009 album debut, *The Lines*, Tamara Lindeman has drifted away from Americana to arrive at her first self-titled (and self-produced) record, where her pearlescent, Joni Mitchell-style voice and feel are the clearest yet. She also has something of Bill Callahan's reserve, getting direct to the emotional nub of a song, but with words aplenty, more like a Raymond Carver short story than Joni or Bill, so closely woven are these 11 tales of love (lost and found) and memory. Thirty begins "There was a time when you put your hand on the small of my back"; Black Flies opens "Humid wood, you felt good, you shook your tangled hair down"; the album closes with The Most Dangerous Thing About You. Lindeman occasionally wields her bluegrass banjo, but mostly it's a set of soft, lush frames – strings, piano, tangled acoustic guitar – for these intimate conversations.

*Martin Aston*

only adds to the intrigue of this exquisite dark jewel.

*Martin Aston*

**Dream a rainbow: Beck reflects on the state of his palette.**

Eliot Lee Hazel

## Beck

★★★

Colors

VIRGIN EMI. CD/DL/LP

**Beck's thirteenth album finally sees the light.**

If the slow process and postponed release dates weren't enough to suggest that Beck's new record has had a difficult genesis ("it's done when it's done," he said), then its songs definitely heighten suspicions. Three years after the dawn-fresh *Morning Phase*, *Colors* can feel overworked, overstretched, like dough with thumbprints visible around the edges. The title track's fluting funk, or No Distraction's uptight Police scrabble, lacks the elves-workshop stitching of his best work, but there's still plenty here that tips the needle from "interesting" into "brilliant". The loopy, hot-tarmac hip-hop of Wow swan-dives merrily into Loser self-parody – "Girl in a bikini with the Lamborghini Shih Tzu" indeed – while Dear Life, holing up with the *White Album* for its existential crisis, makes up for I'm So Free's bizarre corporate grunge chorus. It's a messy, vibrant record, and if his palette occasionally blurs into muddiness, at least he's still trying for a rainbow.

*Victoria Segal*

Bill MacKay - Ryley Walker
SpiderBeetleBee

## Bill MacKay Ryley Walker

★★★★

SpiderBeetleBee

DRAG CITY. CD/DL/LP

**Second instrumental collaboration.**

Recorded during a month-long live residency at Chicago's Whistler bar in 2015, issued on that venue's own label, Bill MacKay and Ryley Walker's first album of guitar duos, *Land Of Plenty*, was a minor revelation, two instrumental masters on a lysergic peregrination through a landscape of hazy valleys and dizzying peaks. Cut in Chicago at the start of last year, *SpiderBeetleBee* is their follow-up and continues that magical journey. From old-timey Faheyesque riversides (The Grand Old Trout) to autumnal Bryter Layter woodlands (Pretty Weeds Revisited) and home to Jansch/Renbourn firesides (Lonesome Traveller), *SpiderBeetleBee* is part history lesson, part New World exploration; the familiar made strange by glistening harmonics, the antic tabla rhythms of Ryan Jewell, Katinka Kleijn's cello and the kora tones of MacKay's own high-fretted Requinto guitar.

*Andrew Male*

## Marry Waterson & David A Jaycock

★★★★

Death Had Quicker Wings Than Love

ONE LITTLE INDIAN. CD/DL/LP

**Follow-up to 2015 debut *Two Wolves*. Guests include John Parish, Kathryn Williams and Romeo Stodart.**

James Yorkston once called guitarist David Jaycock "an underground psychedelic freak-ball", but the latter is actually a master of understatement. Likewise Adrian 'Portishead' Utley's production: a Moog here or an E-bow or zither there add shivery details to the main fare. And as the Waterson family are wont to do, Marry serves the song, not the singer. She shares her late mother Lal's timbre – "earthy, dreamlike, warm, powerful and jagged" reckons Jaycock – which suits the piercing grace of these original songs. There's still a sense of 'trad', though, from the album title – inscribed on the grave of 18th century virgin Mary Woodson – to Waterson's reworking of fables, to convey a theme of feeling "lost." Where Gunshot Lips fits in ("As smoke lifts from your gunshot lips, me turning tricks makes me your bitch")

Marry Waterson & David A Jaycock
Death had Quicker Wings than Love

## JD McPherson

★★★

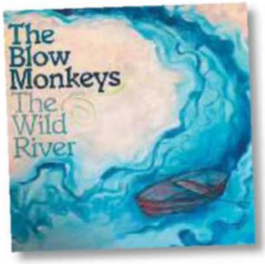
Undivided Heart & Soul

NEW WEST. CD/DL/LP

**Oklahoman's third album kicks out the rockabilly jams.**

Relocating his family from Oklahoma to East Nashville has been fortuitous for JD McPherson. Not only has he scored a deal with indie powerhouse New West, but a new group of buddies have helped him avoid hitting a creative brick wall. Scrapping the original album sessions, a weekend jamming with Josh Homme and dragging in Lucius drummer Dan Molad as producer widened his perspective and has taken his music somewhere else. Coupled to his own modern take on Duane Eddy, McPherson is also as keen to dig into the distorted blues rock of QOTSA, tear-stained Irma Thomas heartache on the deep soul ballad Hunting For Sugar, or '60s garage psych for Let's Get Out Of Here While We're Young. Although still rooted in rockabilly terra firma, with cameos from the likes of Nashville groovester Aaron Lee Tasjan, McPherson's horizon has never sounded so open.

*Andy Fyfe*



## The Blow Monkeys

★★★★

The Wild River

MONK'S ROAD. CD/DL/LP

**Back-to-their-roots fifth album since the group's 2008 reformation.**

The brief for *The Wild River* is simple: in the wake of austerity politics, return the band to its soulful roots to deliver peaceful protest and redemption. The touchstone is Curtis Mayfield and the 10 songs produced, written and recorded by Dr Robert in his Andalusia home, are conscience-driven soul, each one executed with intelligence and beauty and delivered from the heart. Over What In The World's aquarelle wash of guitar and strings, he cries, "I can't live here any more, I don't want to see destruction here, I don't want to breathe the air here, I just want to see the children laughing here." God's Gift, an acid funk fusion with flute and sax, and the folky-guitar-and-strings title track are more optimistic, bringing restorative power in the music itself.

*Lois Wilson*

## Marc Almond

★★★★

Shadows And Reflections

BMG. CD/DL/LP

**A lesson in '60s heartache by the Doctor of Philosophy.**

MARC ALMOND

He might possess a voice to frighten the X-Factor generation in its theatricality but Almond has certainly never sounded better as a singer than on this, largely a collection of covers of often obscure source material. The focus is on meltingly sad ballads, with fairly faithful covers of The Young Rascals' How Can I Be Sure, Not For Me by Bobby Darin and Julie Driscoll's I Know You Love Me Not. The key to the album, however, is the original material: The Overture, Interlude and finale, No One To Say Goodnight To, created in collaboration with John Harle. The music swirls like the Aqua Marina closing theme to Stingray, whilst the words tell of a man surrounded by treasures, living "a magazine" life, but friendless and dehumanised, like the trapped soul in Roxy Music's In Every Dream Home A Heartache. An album of Almond originals is promised for 2018.

*David Buckley*

## Wild Billy Childish & CTMF

★★★

Brand New Cage

DAMAGED GOODS. CD/DL/LP

**Fifth album in as many years by Childish's punk rock trio.**

brand new cage

One of Billy Childish's songs here is called The Punk Was In Me (And It Had Come Out). The punk did, rather spectacularly come out of Childish, of course, almost four decades ago, fuelling The Pop Rivets et al and it still defines him musically and lyrically today. Over angry guitar, pounding bass and heavy drums, he repeatedly yells, "Are you better than me?" on the song of the same title. On What About Brian, he rages, "There's a plaque for Mick and Keith, but what about Brian?" referring to the blond bowlcutted founder of the Stones. It's All Gone Wrong, co-written with and sung by bassist Nurse Julie, sounds like it's straight off a *Girls With Guitars* compilation, while You Destabilise Me is an indignant rewrite of The Who's I Can't Explain.

*Lois Wilson*

### Phoebe Bridgers

★★★★

Stranger In The Alps

DEAD OCEANS. CD/DL/LP

Los Angeleno whose cover of Pixies' Gigantic featured in an iPhone ad, here with her own, very dark material. Hushed and intimate or smartly melodic, her arrangements mostly have a Twin Peaksy gothic chill; barbed but beautiful. *JB*

### CousteauX

★★★★

CousteauX

SILENT X. CD/DL

Formerly just Cousteau, Irish/Australian torch balladeers return after a decade away with feel-the-quality noirish songs of emotional masochism. Liam McKahey's weathered basso profundo hits Scott Walker and Bowie buttons. *IH*

### Dixie Chicks

★★★★

DCX MMXVI

SONY. CD+DVD

Live LP and film confirms the Texan trio's ability to transcend genres with intransigent outspokenness and punk rock vigour (Truth No 2's sharp-banjo riffing; Emily Robison's Paul Simonon quiff/sleeveless shirt combo). *JB*

### Deer Tick

★★★

Vol. 1

PARTISAN. CD/DL/LP

Providence, RI quartet release two self-titled albums on the same day. *Vol. 1* here is mellow, introspective and rootsy, leaving singer John McCauley's keening voice raw and exposed. *Vol. 2* is its noisy yang. *Vol. 1* wins on tunes. *JB*

### Guided By Voices

★★★

How Do You Spell Heaven

GBV. CD/DL/LP

Marching ever on, Bob Pollard follows 2016's hundredth release with business as usual: expansive, often magical, raw rock'n'roll classicism. Key lyric: "And we all go to see 'em in the Steppenwolf mausoleum". *JB*

### Hurts

★★

Desire

BMG. CD/DL

Manchester pop duo's bedroom-recorded third can't quite reconnect to the moody, Mitteleuropean promise of their 2009 debut. Only the tart Princely funk of Boyfriend lets light through lacquered layers of modern pop production. *JB*

### Carole King

★★★★

Tapestry Live In Hyde Park

LEGACY. CD+DVD/DL/BR

Last summer's live debut for King's unimpeachable 1971 album saw London's royal park resound with Lauren Canyon positivity and CK's still fresh voice. The cast of Beautiful fits with unforeseen subtlety. *JB*

### The New Faith

★★★

Me On You

FAITH HEALER. CD/DL

Brighton group tug on a strand of British songwriting whose threads wove the bedsit eiderdowns of mopey '80 and '90s touchstones (Black/Moz etc), on touchingly gauche debut full of doomy ballads and wry introspection. *JB*

### Rationale

★★★★

Rationale

WARNER BROS. CD/DL/LP

Tinashé Fazakerley once drew on his Zimbabwe roots to spice up his singer-songwriter fare. As Rationale, the Londoner foregrounds his lush baritone and au courant pop-soul sonics – sub aqua bass; billowy synths – on powerful debut. *JB*

### Reverend And The Makers

★★★

Death Of A King

COOKING VINYL. CD/DL/LP

Recorded in Thailand, the Sheffield five's sixth album builds on 2015's *Mirrors*, scoring conscious lyrics with psychedelia, strings and horns. James Skelly and John Cooper Clarke guest on bonus cuts. *LW*

### Starsailor

★★★

All This Life

COOKING VINYL. CD/DL/LP

The Wigan quartet's first studio long-player in eight years is an often winning fusion of powerpop, electronics and blue-eyed soul. Listen To Your Heart presents the key to their bolder sound. *DB*

### John Stirratt & Paul Pilot

★★★★

Finding Oscar OST

DÉCOR. CD/DL

Wilco mainstay Stirratt and Irish producer Pilot score Frank Marshall's bleak doc about a Guatemalan orphan. Peter Buck, Scott McCaughey recast R.E.M.'s Flowers Of Guatemala as the sad centrepiece. *CP*

### Andrew Weatherall

★★★

Qualia

HÖGA NORD. DL/LP/MC

Emboldened by reading novelists Patrick Modiano and David Keenan, the idiosyncratic leftfield 'Guv'nor' indulges in more motorik rhythms, frazzled post-rock and glam rock beats. *SW*

### The White Buffalo

★★★

Darkest Darks, Lightest Lights

EARACHE. CD/DL/LP

Jake Smith has perfected his Springsteenian portrait songs of American archetypes: barflies and bank robbers, misfits and madams. Meat and potatoes stuff, but his deep, sour mash voice convinces. *JB*

## NOWSTREAMING

### Object Collection

It's All True

When is a performance art tribute to Fugazi not a performance art tribute to Fugazi? When it's an "opera-in-suspension" created from the non-playing bits of the band's live archive. The makers of It's All True sifted 1,500 hours of tapes, avoiding songs and building from incidental sounds, heckles, feedback etc and then recreated it all. The actual show features both a live band and a cast who string together snatched vocals into something of a narrative. The finished piece – brash, chaotic, unsettling, bit Am-dram – is disorientating, yet detailed; you suspect Fugazi will approve. *PS*

**Find it:** *Various streaming services/YouTube*

**Baywaves**

liss

Charming, sun-drenched jangle from the Madrid newcomers. Warm and enveloping, it's the perfect soundtrack to let your ice lolly melt to.

**Find it:** *Various streaming services*

Ease my mind

**Shout Out Louds**

Porcelain

The Swedes return after a four-year break with album *Easy My Mind*. This teaser track suggests they've lost none of their quirk pop charm.

**Find it:** *Various services*

# Recommended Retailers

Here's the exclusive monthly guide to the country's most mouthwatering independent record emporia. Chosen for their knowledge of both current releases and specialist areas, they're guaranteed to provide the personal touch you won't find elsewhere. And they stock MOJO too. All where you see this sign.

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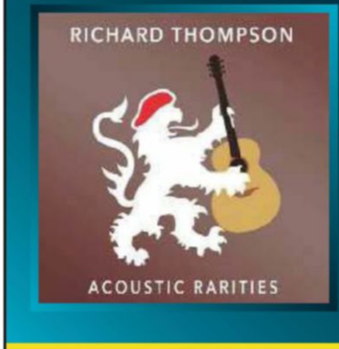

**Following the release of *Acoustic Classics Vol. II* to great reviews in August, Richard Thompson will release *Acoustic Rarities* (Beeswing via Proper Distribution) on October 6, just ahead of his solo UK tour that month. *Acoustic Rarities* features new recordings of some of the more obscure songs in the Thompson catalogue, some previously existing only as cover versions.**
**BEESWING**

## BRUCE COCKBURN
## BONE ON BONE

BRUCE COCKBURN
BONE ON BONE

**The 12-time Juno winner and Canadian Music Hall Of Fame inductee, Bruce Cockburn's 33rd album arrives with 11 new songs and there's a prevalent urgency and anxious tone to much of the album, which Cockburn attributes to living in America during the Trump era. But, more than anything, *Bone On Bone* amounts to the deepest expression of Cockburn's spiritual concerns to date.**
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## HEAVEN & EARTH
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HEAVEN & EARTH
HARD TO KILL

**Designed and directed by British-born, Los Angeles-based blues-rock guitar virtuoso Stuart Smith, Heaven & Earth specialize in melodic, classic hard rock in the vein of Deep Purple, Rainbow, and Bad Company. New album *Hard To Kill* includes a DVD film of the band recording the album in the studio.**
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## NERINA PALLOT
## STAY LUCKY

**Nerina Pallot's sixth album *Stay Lucky* was written and produced by Pallot and is, truly and deeply, her most personal, most warmly emotional album yet. She is joined by Bernard Butler, Markus Feehily and Rod Thomas.**
**Her core recording band on the album are from Michael Kiwanuka's touring band - Steve Pringle on keys, Alex Bonfanti on bass and Lewis Wright on drums.**
***"A dexterous, complex but affecting return..."* CLASH MAGAZINE**
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# It's a royal knock-out

The record that stands as their masterpiece expanded, finally, after 31 years. Will multiformatting dilute the original's majesty? asks John Harris.

## The Smiths

★★★★★

### The Queen Is Dead

WARNER MUSIC **CD/CD+DVD/LP**

THE SMITHS
The Queen Is Dead

Sixteen years ago, Johnny Marr spent three hours in the back of a Mancunian bar, talking to MOJO about the tangled saga of *The Queen Is Dead*. "I wanted us to be as good as my heroes," he said. "Right from the off with The Smiths, in my head we were our own Rolling Stones. On top of that, we were being talked about in legendary terms. So, you'd look at bands like The Who and the Small Faces – that pantheon of British bands – and think, Well, are we going to do it or not? Now's the time – it's the third album."

In retrospect, they had arguably done it already – with *Meat Is Murder*, the wintry, fierce, brilliantly emotional record whose reputation has slowly grown since The Smiths broke up in 1987. But by a mixture of accident and design, it is this album that stands as their masterpiece. Part of the explanation is down to the entire package: the British Racing Green colour-scheme (now bafflingly redone in black and white – why?), the Alain Delon sleeve photo, the Salford Lads Club portrait, the inspired effrontery of the title. But clearly, *The Queen Is Dead* reigns supreme thanks to a handful of songs – I Know It's Over, There Is A Light That Never Goes Out, Bigmouth Strikes Again – that capture The Smiths at their absolute peak, and a title track that is arguably their single greatest achievement.

In Autobiography, Morrissey looks back on Marr in "the full vigour of his greatness", playing chords that were "biteable and studlike". He also quotes a letter sent to him by Rough Trade's Geoff Travis: "On *The Queen*… you bed down with the language of rock'n'roll and pour scorn on its conventions… Without doubt The Smiths finest work and a personal triumph." The review in Rolling Stone, for what it was worth, cocked a snook at Morrissey's "misery-goat costume" (whatever that was), but concluded with a note of grudging praise: "Like it or not, this guy's going to be around for a while."

Thirty-one years later, the fact that *The Queen Is Dead* is the first Smiths LP to be expanded and multiformatted has an air of inevitability, but also comes with a sense of trepidation. In an age when classic albums are routinely expanded over nine CDs with reproduction tour programmes and T-shirts – and someone on Twitter can always be depended on to quote the "Reissue! Repackage!" lines from Paint A Vulgar Picture – there was always something noble about the fact that The Smiths' catalogue remained pretty much as was, give or take the Marr-authored remasterings of 2011. Given the almost supernatural quality of their canon, might adding to it risk diluting perfection?

Then on comes the fabled "full version" of The Queen Is Dead, and all reservations melt away: 7:13 as opposed to the edited 6:27, it fleshes out Marr's quest to somehow combine the Lou Reed rhythm guitar style showcased on The Velvet Underground's I Can't Stand It with the "energy and coolness" of the MC5. The edited-out part starts at 5:05, and lasts for just over 30 seconds: as with Bigmouth Strikes Again, the whole thing only underlines what a ferocious rock band they had become.

Among the eight other demos and early takes also included on all the new editions (along with four B-sides), there are other such highlights. The much-bootlegged "trumpet version" of Frankly, Mr Shankly is absent, but the similarly brass-assisted Never Had No One Ever referenced in Simon Goddard's peerless track-by-track book Songs That Saved Your Life has made the cut, smattered with spectacularly incongruous vamps played by a man Mike Joyce recalled as a "BBC orchestra guy", and the sound of Morrissey collapsing into entirely appropriate fits of mirth.

The absence of "Oh, mother" at the start of a demo version of I Know It's Over is striking, as is the image of an "icy bed" as against the finished take's empty one, and the more prosaic "I don't see what else I can do", soon to be replaced by the appreciably more heartbreaking "don't know where else I can go." And though it's missing Morrissey's "Send me the pillow" ad-libs, an early treatment of Some Girls Are Bigger Than Others threatens to be better than the finished version, thanks to its unadorned directness: an update of the *Hatful Of Hollow* aesthetic, once again revealing a consummate rock group.

On the 3-CD edition and a 5-LP vinyl version is a soundboard recording from a live show in Boston on August 5, 1986, during the tour that saw the group's sound bulked-up by the addition of second guitarist Craig Gannon, and what Marr recalled as "dramas going on all the time". It lacks the finesse and atmosphere of the official live album *Rank*, but the music's power and verve – not to mention the crowd's evident hysteria – are as remarkable as you'd expect. How Soon Is Now?, Hand In Glove and I Want The One I Can't Have are particularly superb, as is There Is A Light That Never Goes Out. The version of The Queen Is Dead doesn't quite achieve the heights of controlled mania scraped by a version from Irvine Meadows, California, recently placed on Spotify, but is still joyously feral.

As for the original album itself, what do you need to know? It starts with that darkened sprint through all of England's absurdity and doom, and ends with Antony and Cleopatra and that crate of ale. On a good day, even Vicar In A Tutu sounds great. If you came of age in the 1980s and possessed anything like good taste, you will know: they really were our Rolling Stones, and arguably much more. And rejoice: their entry into Deluxe Edition-land only confirms it.

**KEY TRACKS**

- The Queen Is Dead (full version)
- Some Girls Are Bigger Than Others (demo)
- How Soon Is Now? (live)

**BACK STORY: BACK ON THE THRONE**

- Plans for the new editions of *TQID* date back at least two years, and this is the first big tranche of unreleased Smiths material to be officially put out. On the Deluxe 3-CD + DVD version, as well as a "96kHz/24-bit PCM stereo" version of the album, it also includes the three-song short film The Queen Is Dead – including the title track, There Is A Light That Never Goes Out and Panic – directed by Derek Jarman (above). The live recording of the 1986 Boston show improves on such audience-taped bootlegs of the same show as So This Is America and Live In The USA: anyone who was there will recall that tickets went for a princely $17.50.

**"IF YOU CAME OF AGE IN THE '80s, THEY WERE OUR ROLLING STONES AND MUCH MORE."**

Getty Images (2)

THE
QUEEN
IS
DEAD

Long live The Smiths: Morrissey issues a proclamation at the G-Mex Centre in Manchester, July 19, 1986.

Bizarre juxtapositions: exotica king Martin Denny (left).

# Stranger things

Jon Savage finds himself in instro heaven, beautifully compiled and annotated.

## Various

★★★★★

Sounds Of The Unexpected: Weird And Wacky Instrumentals From Pop's Final Frontiers

ACE. CD/DL

SOUNDS
OF THE
UNEXPECTED

It's like the old story of the Pied Piper: most people aren't that passionate about music, but a small proportion of the population (including many readers of this magazine) are totally obsessed and will follow the piper wherever he or she leads. With that level of commitment, music becomes a common language: when you encounter a fellow obsessive you quickly trust their taste – even if it's not immediately your own – because you know it's based on knowledge, experience and love. Who knows, you might even learn something.

*Sounds Of The Unexpected* is the brainchild of Vicki Fox, a rock'n'roll lifer who began working at Ted Carroll's famed Rock On stall in Golborne Road during 1976 at the age of 18 and stayed on to become an integral part of the Ace Records family. Her expertly selected record collection has already given us the compilations *All Aboard: 25 Train Tracks* and *Feline Groovy: 24 Purrfect Tracks For Cool Cats*, but this 24-tracker is her crowning glory.

Spanning 1959-72, this instrumental confection successfully fuses such genres as surf, jungle exotica, modal jazz, reggae, early soul and early electronica. Present and correct are such big names as Bo Diddley (1961's Aztec, played by Peggy Jones AKA Lady Bo), George Martin (Waltz In Orbit, 1962), Martin Denny (Misirlou), Jean Jacques Perrey (Moog Indigo), Timmy Thomas (avant drum machine workout Funky Me) and, of course, Joe Meek (The Tornados' compulsively strange, unjustly ignored 1964 single Hot Pot).

These are matched if not surpassed by lesser-known names like Jan Davis (Watusi Zombie), The Atlantics (1964's War Of The Worlds; The Shadows' sound taken to its ultimate with a killer guitar breakdown), The Forbidden Five (the mad exotica of 1959's R.F.D. Rangoon – "she did enjoy a bonkers record", says Ace's Roger Armstrong), Ray Ellis & His Orchestra (The Sheik: burlesque and exotic at the same time), and The Imps' super-tough 1960 Uh-Oh – a mixture of Ritchie Valens and Link Wray.

Common to all is a sense of exploration, bizarre juxtapositions and a sheer delight in distorted sounds. "Electricity comes from other planets," Lou Reed once mentioned in a throw-away line, and these inspirational records – at once brutal and alien – are a testament to the incredible fertility and strangeness of popular music. Sadly, Vicki passed during the preparation of this comp, but these 24 tracks – each with notes written by a different friend and colleague – accurately reflect her questing spirit.

## Various

★★★★

Even A Tree Can Shed Tears: Japanese Folk & Rock 1969-1973

LIGHT IN THE ATTIC. CD/DL/LP

**First licensed set of 'angura' counterculture outside Japan.**

Japan's vast under-reported (in the West) *angura* ("underground") gelled around US blueprints, Vietnam protest and its own anti-establishment blues. The core sound was soft rock, from folk to occasional CSN models (Hachimitsu Pie, Happy End), and (very) mild heaviness (Gypsy Blood). Yosuke Kitazawa's excellent sleevenotes (plus translated English lyrics, essential to comprehend the scene) but Western ears will find Gu's "acid-folk" lacking anything lysergic, and if Kazuhiko Kato was "progressive", so too was mid-'60s Donovan. But this absence of edge makes *Even A Tree…* an exquisite, meditative experience. Melodies eschewed obvious hooks, choruses and solos; instrumentation was often very spare, giving singers a lot of room, as artists like Akai Tori, Tetsuo Saito, and Fluid exhibited the influence of enka (sentimental ballads). Your next Sunday morning soundtrack, or crate-digging obsession?

*Martin Aston*

## Don Ellis

★★★★

Soaring

MPS. CD/DL/LP

**High-voltage exploratory big band jazz from the '70s.**

Don Ellis is best remembered as the soundtrack composer of the two French Connection movies starring Gene Hackman. Besides his film work, Ellis (who worked with Charles Mingus and Eric Dolphy in the early '60s) was a remarkable and innovative jazz trumpeter renowned for experimentation (he played a quarter-tone horn, and used complex time signatures, electronics, and Indian music). He recorded seven albums for Columbia between 1967 and 1972 before joining German label MPS in 1973, where he recorded *Soaring* with a 22-piece orchestra. The opener is Ellis's definitive Whiplash, the Hank Levy-penned juggernaut funk groove that inspired the 2014 Oscar-winning movie of the same name. There are many other memorable moments on this remastered reissue, where scintillating passages of solo improv are wedded to super-slick ensemble work.

*Charles Waring*

## George Michael

★★★★

Listen Without Prejudice/MTV Unplugged

SONY. CD/DL/LP

**Lend him your ears, again: transitional moment in the life of the complete pop star.**

In 1990, George Michael was on a dangerous mission. Having proved decisively he could survive as a post-Wham! solo artist with 1987's *Faith*, he was keen to combine commercial glory with serious critical acclaim. Pure hubris – if *Listen Without Prejudice* hadn't been so abundantly up to the task. This reissue, paired with his graceful 1996 MTV Unplugged show, captures a star at full throttle. Flashing his style-shifting ability on Soul Free's vintage good times, the melting Beatles of Heal The Pain and the intimate cabaret of Cowboys And Angels, he also emphasised his thoughtful side on the anti-war Mother's Pride and the sodden grandeur of Praying For Time. Vulnerability underpins this album, though, best articulated on the fabulous Freedom '90, a song that asks listeners to accept this brave new George: "There's someone I forgot to be". A fine memorial.

*Victoria Segal*

## Jon Hassell

★★★★

Dream Theory In Malaya: Fourth World Music Volume Two

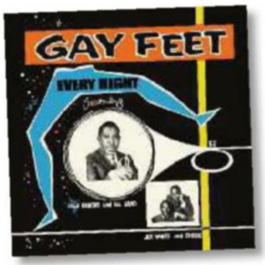
TAK:TIL/GLITTERBEAT. CD/LP

**Less Eno, more exploration on trumpeter-auteur's follow-up to *Possible Musics*.**

*Dream Theory In Malaya*'s centre-piece was inspired by an article about and a BBC field recording of the music of Malay tribes. From these, Jon Hassell created a scale conforming to Indonesian tuning for his trumpet and incorporated the recorded sound as a rhythm. With this, he had the foundations for an album of pulsing and shape-shifting electro-acoustic pieces in line with his idea of a "Fourth World Music": music eschewing geographical and cultural boundaries. When first issued in 1981, David Byrne and Eno's Hassell-indebted *My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts* was in the shops. A year earlier, *Fourth World Vol. 1: Possible Musics* was credited to Jon Hassell/Brian Eno and filed under "E" for Eno. Though Eno contributed, Hassell's is the one name on *Dream Theory In Malaya*'s front cover. Credit had been claimed.

*Kieron Tyler*

Getty Images



## Various

★★★★

### Gay Feet: Every Night

DUB STORE. CD/DL/LP

**Reissue of rare 1965 LP, gathering Sonia Pottinger's earliest productions.**

When Sonia Pottinger's husband Lindon broke up their marriage and quit the fledgling Jamaican music industry, Sonia quickly stepped up to the plate and began producing records herself, becoming the sole female in a very male-dominated field. Harnessing trumpeter Baba Brooks as chief musical arranger, Pottinger worked from an intuitive perspective and quickly became a formidable presence on the Kingston music scene. *Gay Feet* was the first album she ever issued and is here given a long overdue re-release in the original form. It veers between such tear-jerking ballads as The Techniques' Heartaches and the massively successful Every Night (by vocal duo Joe White & Chuck), to Latiny instrumentals from Baba Brooks's band, such as Mosquito Jump Up, Ki Salavoca and Bugle Boy, the latter borrowing from El Manicero. Despite the short length of the album, there is plenty to discover here.

*David Katz*

## The Replacements

★★★★

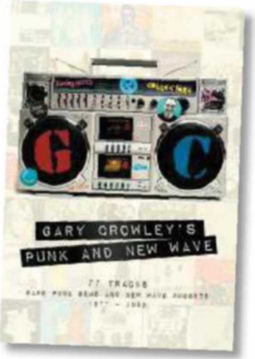
### For Sale: Live At Maxwell's 1986

RHINO. CD/DL/LP

**Minneapolis misfits' ragged glory taped in Hoboken, NJ.**

Peel back a layer or two of wit and anger and most Replacements songs are rooted in fear. Kiss Me On The Bus: vulnerability. Answering Machine: rejection. Bastards Of Young: growing up, dying. Even the songs that play for laughs – Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out or Waitress In The Sky – are about dread of different sorts. *For Sale* ratchets up the band's ever-present anxiety with a dose of on-stage adrenalin to make this the Holy Grail 'Mats fans have hankered after for decades. Here is their original and best line-up (if not healthiest; Bob Stinson would be fired within months), hot on the heels of *Tim*, with writing for *Pleased To Meet Me* underway. The covers on this 29-song set – Beatles, Sweet, T. Rex, Vanity Fare – are fine enough, though hardly treated to the band's greatest fury. Prime time. Overdue.

*Chris Nelson*



## Various

★★★★

### Gary Crowley's Punk And New Wave

EDSEL. CD

**Three CDs and 77 singles from 1976-1982 – not just the usual suspects.**

This abundant and highly entertaining compilation gives an accurate flavour of teenage British music in the late '70s and early '80s. As an idea and a feeling, punk was energy incarnate. As a form, it provided a grid into which musicians could pour whatever they wanted. Gary Crowley and Jim Lahat offer the resulting eclecticism as a virtue, as the music veers from souped-up rock'n'roll, new wave, post-punk, powerpop, feminist bounce and even '60s R&B (The Nips' All The Time In The World). The set is powerpop-heavy, so classic structures are largely adhered to, although accelerated with loud and distorted guitars. The many revelations include The Tights' Howard Hughes, The Things' Pieces Of You, The Photos' Barbarellas, and definitive Nothing To Do In A Town Like Leatherhead by The Head. Getting Nowhere Fast by Girls At Our Best and the Mo-dettes' White Mice take the prize.

*Jon Savage*

## Dalek I Love You

★★★

### Dalek I Love You

MAN IN THE MOON. CD/DL/LP

**Synth-pop cult's second album. One further unreleased track added.**

In Liverpool's post-punk family tree, Dalek I Love You are a mass of tangled branches. Founders Alan Gill and Dave Balfe aimed to emulate Kraftwerk's future-now ideology, and as members came and went (including Balfe), 1980 debut *Compass Kum'pas* resembled a quirkier, broodier OMD (Andy McCluskey was a Dalek for a month). Gill then joined The Teardrop Explodes, co-writing while introducing Julian Cope to LSD, before resuming Dalek with various ex-members and ringing in the '80s-dance changes: busier textures, funk beats, female backing singers. Ambition is faceless disco, 12 Hours Of Blues is vexingly Spandau-bland and Gill over-revelled in a bigger budget, but The Mouse That Roared, Dad On Fire and Sons Of Sahara stand with the best of the debut album. For all its weak spots and over-ambition, few albums of this 1983 vintage can compete for intriguing, and probably LSD-filtered, stabs at mainstream invasion.

*Martin Aston*

## Rick Deitrick

★★★★

### Gentle Wilderness

TOMPKINS SQUARE. LP

**First ever reissue of 1978 private press LP.**

Since 2005, Tompkins Square have been deep-mining to great effect the New American Guitar in their *Imaginational Anthem* series. Following on from *Volume 8: The Private Press* comes this full-length album from 1978: originally released in an edition of 500, sold at gigs, given to libraries, and, on a couple of occasions, left on trails in the middle of the wilderness. In a crowded field of solo guitar issues, this stands out. Self-taught, Rick Deitrick used his own tuning and aimed to reflect his inspiration in his playing: nature in general and in particular the rivers of the western United States. Titles like Koto Rain, Deep Within The Forest Of The Heart and Green Green Grass Of Home (NOT the Tom Jones warhorse) are quiet, melodic and meditative – far from Fahey angst and Basho torrents, but steely enough to repay repeated listening.

*Jon Savage*

## Lee 'Scratch' Perry & Subatomic Sound System

★★★

### Super Ape Returns To Conquer

SUBATOMIC SOUND. CD/DL/LP

**'Scratch' classic inna reconfigured style.**

The dub masterwork *Super Ape* first surfaced from Lee 'Scratch' Perry's Black Ark studio in 1976 as a dense tapestry, a heavily layered audio canvas that drew from various album projects. To mark the 40th anniversary of initial release, long-time Perry collaborators Subatomic Sound System have recreated each rhythm as a platform for new multitrack vocals from Scratch, much of which deviates from *Super Ape*'s prior subject matter, to yield a 2.0 rendition of the disc. Extra care has been taken by project spearhead Emch Subatomic to be tastefully faithful to the original rhythms, helping President Perrica to feel more comfortable on the microphone, celebrating Selassie's eternal reign on Zion's Blood and blasting record company foes on Chase The Devil. With Larry McDonald on percussion and backing vocals, the album remains eminently listenable and better than expected.

*David Katz*

## Various

★★★

### Take What You Need – UK Covers Of Bob Dylan Songs 1964-69

ACE. CD

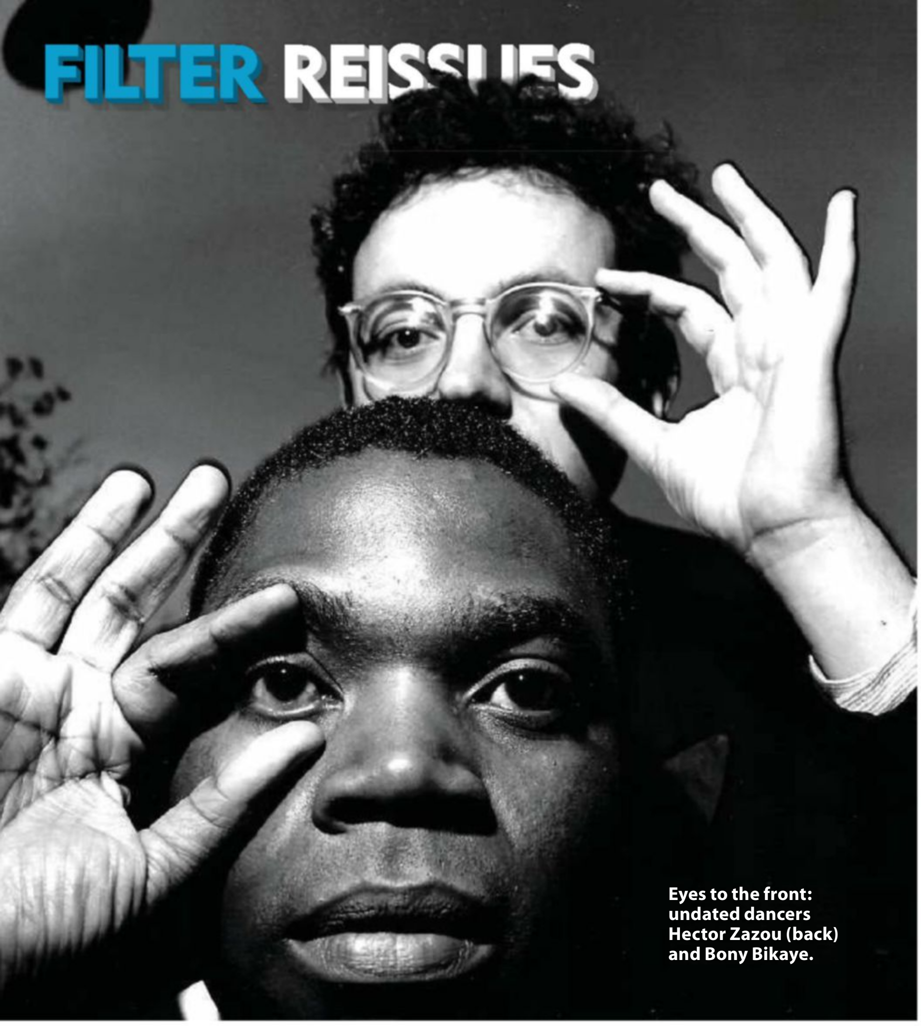
**Julie D, Julie F, Chad, Jeremy, Noel and Boz do Bob!**

Before the album became the sovereign of serious worth, Britpop's '60s span at 45rpm; anything went, including a dip into the Dylan songbook by folkies, singers and chancers alike craving a chartbound sound. As compiler Mick Houghton's excellent sleevenotes explain, in May '65 Dylan's UK stock shot from cult to chartbuster, driven not just by poetic lyrics but tunes you could take to the bank, especially when artist or producer fore-grounded the sing-along hooks half-hidden in the song's original weave. Bob poppifiers supreme Manfred Mann scored a Number 1 with The Mighty Quinn, but it's If You Gotta Go, Go Now that gleams among 22 historically fascinating but artistically variable cuts digging deep below the Top 20 to a world embracing Sandie Shaw and Sandy Denny, Andrew Lloyd Webber and Twink on equal terms – if not equal brilliance.

*Mat Snow*

**Pleased to meet you: The Replacements at legendary Hoboken club Maxwell's, February 4, 1986.**

Caryn Rose



**Eyes to the front: undated dancers Hector Zazou (back) and Bony Bikaye.**

Xavier Lambours

## Zazou/Bikaye/CY1

★★★★

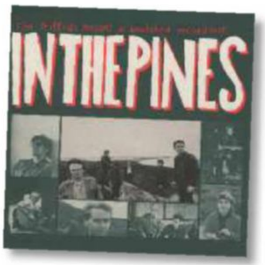
### Noir Et Blanc

CRAMMED DISCS. LP

**European-Congolese fusion still years ahead of its time.**

With its offspring – from Congotronics to Afrobeats – intrinsic to the clubland fabric in 2017, it's hard to appreciate how revolutionary *Noir Et Blanc* was in 1983… Or it would be, if it didn't still sound futuristic. Brian Eno and David Byrne's *My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts* was two years old, Arthur Baker was the king of clubland, and Can were veterans at fiddling with imported grooves, but the combination of a Krautrock-obsessed Congolese vocalist (Bony Bikaye), a legit composer (Hector Zazou) and two Frenchmen (Claude Micheli and Guillaume Loizillon, aka CY1) with an untameable modular synth gave the nine tracks African authenticity and European surrealism. Adding to the tension, mixing was done on the fly, giving an as-live/ unrepeatable feel. There are few 35-year-old dance tracks that don't sound dated – here's a whole album of them.

*David Hutcheon*



## The Triffids

★★★★

### In The Pines

PIAS. CD/DL/LP

**Cult Australians' wild in the country third album.**

Finding your folk roots in some wilderness shack is nothing unusual today, but in the mid '80s it was weird. While they shopped around for a major UK label to eventually release 1986 breakthrough album *Born Sandy Devotional*, The Triffids spent two weeks in a remote Western Australian wool shed making *In The Pines*. Re-released alongside their unjustly overlooked 1983 debut *Treeless Plain*, this latest version of *In The Pines* is essentially a reissue of the 2007 reissue. Though sketchy in parts, Kathy Knows and Just Might Fade Away sport all the paranoid panic of The Birthday Party, if not the horror show menace, while Trick Of The Light and Jerdacuttup Man, both held back from the initial release for inclusion on 1987's *Calenture*, showed songwriter David McComb's romantic side. Wide Open Road is the song that made them famous, but *In The Pines* is where The Triffids' soul lives.

*Andy Fyfe*

## Joe King Kologbo & The High Grace

★★★★

### Sugar Daddy

STRUT. LP

**It's no R-E-S-P-E-C-T, but respect is due.**

Released in Nigeria in 1980, veteran guitarist-singer Kologbo's album was a cheeky riposte to his wife's warnings about his behaviour on the road. Dedicating the three tracks to "those beautiful ladies that were around me in the studio" – presumably vocalists Mrs L Currency and Miss Ogo Onyekozuru Eze – Kologbo merges an old-school vibe with disco and South African jive. The title track, which takes up the first side, is a fun and lengthy slice of '80s highlife, and when the band opens up, particularly on All Fingers Are Not Equal, it becomes harder to understand why Kologbo's footprint is so small these days. He was part of Kuti's circle after the Biafran War (the sleeve features Kologbo standing outside Fela's compound), and his musicians played with Egypt 80 and Tony Allen. Recognition may have come late, but at least it's merited.

*David Hutcheon*

## Janis Ian

★★★

### The Essential 2.0

SONY. CD/DL

**New Yorker's combined Verve, Columbia and Rude Girl label peaks, 1965-2013.**

No other 14-year-old will likely write a song as potent as 1965 hit Society's Child, an aching, preternatural understanding of racism that spoke for every outsider: "One of these days, I'm gonna raise my glistening wings and fly/ But that day will have to wait for a while." Written when Ian was 12, Hair Of Spun Gold's verses explored ages five to a projected 21. In 1975, her age and sense of misfit misery also defined Ian's second smash/ masterpiece, At Seventeen. These two CDs scan non-age-related greatness too: Jesse, Stars and Maria from the mid-'70s – folk AOR with emotional grit – and Giorgio Moroder's remix of Fly Too High. The second CD is patchier; '90s duets with Dolly Parton and Willie Nelson underline Ian's willingness to embrace the sentimentality of Nashville. But noughties folk-blues Danger, Danger and Searching For America confirm Ian has found her way back to righteous indignation.

*Martin Aston*

## Mikado

★★★

### Forever

LES DISQUES DU CREPUSCULE. CD/ LP+DL

**Overlooked but influential '80s French synth-pop duo belatedly get their day.**

Between 1982 and 1987, the Paris-based Mikado issued one album, seven singles and EPs, and cropped up on the odd comp. There were also demos for a second album. Scooping up everything, *Forever* celebrates singer Pascale Borel and instrumentalist Gregori Czerkinsky's stylised *oeuvre*. That Haruomi Hosono of the similarly knowing Yellow Magic Orchestra produced their album makes sense. Mikado's light, Casio-rhythmed Gallic pop framed Borel's breathy, close-miked voice with see-saw keyboard lines, rubbery synthesized bass and marimba-like percussive stabs. Although they never broke into the mainstream, Mikado were well aware of what preceded them (their skeletal deconstruction of the 1965 Serge Gainsbourg-penned France Gall stomper Attends Ou Va-T'En is a winner), succeeded Elli Et Jacno to embody French synth-pop, and doubtless influenced the early configuration of chart staples Niagara. A long-overdue tribute to a missing link in French pop.

*Kieron Tyler*

## The Jazz Butcher

★★★★

### The Wasted Years

FIRE. CD/DL

**First four albums by perspicacious pop eccentric lovingly preserved.**

Pat Fish and his cast of unlikely ne'er-do-wells bludgeoned through pop with carefree abandon. Recorded for buttons, 1983 debut *A Bath Of Bacon* stole shamelessly from The Fall, VU, The Normal and even Steppenwolf to frame its tales of kittens, Bigfoot, goldfish, zombies and party etiquette. Its embryonic lo-fi forays quickly begat the widescreen major chord majesty of *A Scandal In Bohemia*, whose observational wit and leftfield largesse (including birthday presents made from "skins of dead Jim Morrisons") conferred a comedic albatross that *Sex And Travel*'s skewed, disaffected tales of Cold War, melancholia and boozy heartbreak struggled to shake. A fractious, road-wearied ensemble by the last disc here, 1986's torchy *Distressed Gentlefolk*, even overly glossy production couldn't sour the rampant umami of choice cuts Nothing Special or Angels. Bloody marvellous.

*Andy Cowan*

## Don Drummond

★★★★

### Don Cosmic

STUDIO ONE. CD/DL/LP

**Some of Drummond's finest Studio One output.**

A graduate of the famed Alpha Boys School, which gave rise to many of Jamaica's greatest horn players, Don Drummond was a troubled genius who attended the island's largest mental health facility for much of his brilliant yet tragic career. The trombonist is widely recognised as a major creative force in The Skatalites, yet under the tutelage of Studio One founder Clement Dodd, his career thrived long before the group's official formation, so *Don Cosmic* has cherry-picked much of Drummond's best Dodd-produced efforts. Moody numbers such as Far East and the title track hold plenty of minor-key tension, while Jet Stream is a shuffle blues and Schooling The Duke a melodic poke at Dodd's rival, Duke Reid. There are alternate takes of the Last Call fanfare and the dramatic Rain Or Shine as well, all making the package highly recommended.

*David Katz*

## Link Wray

★★★★

Link Wray

FUTURE DAYS. **DL/LP**

**The Rumble rocker's rootsy chicken-shack romp.**

Link Wray went from Rumble to humble with this 1971 album, leaving behind the sound of the former – his proto-metal guitar instrumental classic – and literally brought it all back home, recording in a 3-track Maryland chicken shack. Songs ranged from a cautionary strut about the perils of dope, a couple of gospel numbers and a lovely ballad called Ice People ("they don't treat their fellow man very nice"). Everything was greased with a fuzzy guitar, dobro, mandolin, stomping feet and an "untunable" piano that forced Wray and gang to tune to out-of-tune piano strings and create a swampy cacophony. Known as an instrumentalist, his soulful lead vocals were a delightful surprise and framed by ethereal angel-choir harmonies. The result is a package so raw, it makes *Music From Big Pink* sound slick.

*Michael Simmons*

## Emerson, Lake & Palmer

★★★

Fanfare: 1970-1997

BMG. **CD/DL/LP**

**'70s progressive trio's recorded works in a box.**

With its badges, posters, five bonus discs and previously unreleased triple-vinyl live LP, *Fanfare 1970-1997* fulfils the description "super-deluxe". But at its heart are the remastered versions of ELP's 11 original albums. In the beginning, the trio's bullish disregard for musical convention was to be applauded. Pieces such as 1970's The Barbarian and a live version of *Tarkus*'s title track, recorded in Pennsylvania in '72, are testament to the early ELP's cold, bludgeoning power. Listening to both is like being battered around the head by a Mini Moog. But what made ELP was also their undoing. Greg Lake's pop leanings aside, their shtick was largely music driven by late-20th century keyboard technology, meaning age hasn't been kind to all the work. *Fanfare* and its bounteous extras are perfect for partisans. But musically, it's not for the faint hearted.

*Mark Blake*

## Jackie Shane

★★★★

Any Other Way

NUMERO GROUP. **CD/DL/LP**

**Transgender soul singer's extraordinary studio and live recordings, 1962-69.**

Jackie Shane played drums standing up, in a band led by a trumpeter who blew two horns at once, but what really made her performances so gripping was her voice, an effortless expression of the pride of Otis, the anguish of JB and the spirit of the church. She began in Nashville but came of age in Toronto, recording six singles and a live album, all here on two discs with three previously unissued tracks on the first anthology approved by the transgender pioneer. The 45s are brilliant, from a swinging take on Money to her heartbreaking rendition of Any Other Way, her sole hit. The live recordings from Toronto's Sapphire Tavern in 1967 are exquisite too; an emotion-destroying Don't Play That Song producing awed gasps from the audience.

*Lois Wilson*

## Compton & Batteau

★★★★

In California

EARTH. **CD/DL/LP**

**Forgotten baroque country-folk wonder gets its due.**

To call Compton & Batteau's 1970 LP a lost classic is not entirely correct; diligent record buyers can still find original copies for under a fiver. However, it's undoubtedly unjustly overlooked. Recorded in Columbia's Studio B by Boston school chums John Compton and Robin Batteau after the dissolution of their earlier outfit, Appaloosa, *In California* is a miracle of hippy good fortune. Produced by Abner Spector, who'd previously worked on The Jaynetts' spectral 1963 hit Sally Go Round The Roses, engineered by Moby Grape/Janis Joplin/Santana soundman Glen Kolotkin, with walk-on parts for Poco's Randy Meisner, Jim Messina and Rusty Young, *In California* possesses a soothingly timeless feel, woozy country-psych ruminations on dreams, nature, love and war all elevated heavenward by Batteau's baroque violin accompaniments, the lonesome Nilsson vocals of Compton, and the heavenly harmonies of Robin Lane.

*Andrew Male*

## Thelonious Monk

★★★★

Piano Solo

MASTERWORKS. **CD/DL/LP**

**Jazz pianist's Parisian solo recital, with rare bonuses.**

Monk's first trip to Europe in June 1954 took him exclusively to France but didn't garner many good reviews from the local press, who found the pianist's music, with its pungent dissonances and quirky melodies, hard to fathom. While there, Monk agreed to record some songs alone at the piano, intended solely for radio broadcast but they ended up being released commercially by the Disques Vogue label on a 10-inch LP. Now revived to mark Monk's centenary year, this intimate album proves an enthralling listen. Despite being recorded 63 years ago, the sound quality is superb, revealing every detail in memorable performances of some of the pianist's most famous compositions, including 'Round About Midnight, Well You Needn't, and Evidence. Also included is 20 minutes of previously unreleased material featuring Monk leading a French trio.

*Charles Waring*

## David Bowie

★★★★★

Lodger (Tony Visconti 2017 mix)

PARLOPHONE. **CD/DL/LP**

**Underrated triptych-closer subtly remixed by its producer in 2015-2016.**

Defiantly quirky and intellectual, *Lodger* has also been famously overlooked, a problem producer Tony Visconti has often blamed on a rushed mix. His new rework is subtle and quietly stunning, liberating the album's innate vibrancy and freshness. The sound is now honed, rather than beefed-up – each song elegantly reframed and decluttered. Fantastic Voyage, for example, loses its lumpy guitar and piano arpeggios from the foreground, with simpler guitar drones counterpointing the vocals. Likewise, Carlos Alomar's stomping on-beat drums on Boys Keep Swinging ring out proud and clear, free of the boxiness that impairs much of the original album. The most significant change, though, is the clarity of Bowie's singing; not louder so much as closer, sitting right at the front of your speakers. He sounds so present and alive that it's bound to put a lump in your throat. [Also see *Lodger* feature, p82].

*Paul Trynka*

## VINYL PACKAGE OF THE MONTH

## David Gilmour

Live At Pompeii

COLUMBIA

David Gilmour and Pompeii have history: Pink Floyd's filmed performance here in 1971 was a pivotal moment in their career. Recorded at the same amphitheatre in July 2016, this double live album revisits what Gilmour calls "ghosts from the past" but also his just-released solo record, *Rattle That Lock*. A Boat Lies Waiting, that album's tribute to the late Richard Wright, is exquisite enough to sit next to Wish You Were Here. But Gilmour's new revamped backing band, including Stones sideman Chuck Leavell, have re-energised the boss – and the old songs. Money and The Great Gig In The Sky are given a fresh twist, while One Of These Days sounds more malevolent than ever. *Live At Pompeii* comes in many formats, but there's something very apt about these four, *Ummagumma*-style sides of vinyl. *Mark Blake*

**Jackie Shane: Toronto's transgender pioneer.**

**FILEUNDER**

**"Was this some kind of joke?" Keith Richards (left) and Brian Jones not quite rockin' the Pepper look.**

# Beelzebubblegum

The Rolling Stones' bedevilled Summer of Love. By Jim Irvin.

If you were a Rolling Stone, 1967 was a bummer. The Redlands drug busts, a weird European tour, Keith and Anita copping off, blighting the relationship between Keith and Brian, the convictions and appeals. While the world was letting Peppery sunshine in, the Stones were releasing the gloomy We Love You with its jail-door slamming intro and Lennon and McCartney on backing vocals conducted by Allen Ginsberg. "Just a bit of fun", said Jagger, rather unconvincingly. Somewhere in this chaos they had to follow-up *Between The Buttons*. The transitional, experimental *Their Satanic Majesties Request* ★★★★ (making a 50th anniversary return on vinyl and multi-layered SACD and CD disc with Michael Cooper's elaborate lenticular artwork fully restored) was cut at Olympic with Glyn Johns engineering. The blues was off-message and the future sound not yet settled on, and, with all five Stones seldom present simultaneously, it turned out confused and darker than the times required: the spooky mellotrons, creepy voices, the not-festive burst of We Wish You A Merry Christmas on a Theremin, a street market, a strip club, snoring. Messy, flawed, at times tedious, *TSMR* is nonetheless a gas.

The Stones' take on psych doesn't take place in a Lewis Carroll head-shoppe but In Another Land, 2000 Light Years From Home, a place of isolation, teeming with murk, distortion and wonky mixes. Opening sourly with Nicky Hopkins' queasy piano and some dissonant brass, Sing This All Together, with Paul and John on backing vocals again, almost mocks the Love Generation thing, its optimism a bit strained. Citadel kicks off with one of Keith's great riffs: dripping with menace, there's Mick on the left, mellotrons and anvils on the right, the lyric referencing Candy & Taffy, an early nod to Warhol's gang. Bill Wyman's In Another Land with Hopkins and the Small Faces joining in, is the most generic bit of psych, its chorus – "Then I awoke, was this some kind of joke?" – rather self-aware. "Where's that joint?" asks Mick before the free-form collage reprise of Sing This All Together outstays its welcome.

Side two has deliciously time-locked She's A Rainbow, the evocative Lantern, the unsuccessful hippy meditation Gomper, the chilling 2000 Light Years From Home, and the Mr. Kite In Soho sign-off On With The Show. The cover, both cool and silly, features the Stones as a bunch of pissed-off wizards. There's a maze that (spoiler alert) isn't a maze.

Belittled over the years, not least by the band, this may not have been the record anyone wanted, but it's a revealing document of a crazy mind- and life-altering year, pop and art colliding to curdle like the '60s dream.

> "BELITTLED OVER THE YEARS, NOT LEAST BY THE BAND, IT'S A REVEALING DOCUMENT OF A LIFE-ALTERING YEAR."

PP Arnold
The Turning Tide

### P.P. Arnold

★★★★

The Turning Tide

KUNDALINI. **CD/DL/LP**

Exquisite material from the vaults: unreleased Barry Gibb- and Clapton-produced sides from the late '60s/early '70s, the Small Faces' backing star in full soul flight on covers of Medicated Goo, Born, Spinning Wheel and more. *PG*

JOHN CARPENTER
ANTHOLOGY

### John Carpenter

★★★★

Anthology: Movie Themes 1974-1998

SACRED BONES. **LP**

Feats of minimal synth horror, re-recorded with his son and godson. Includes ominous (Assault On Precinct 13), '80s riffage (Big Trouble In Little In China) and their chilly version of Morricone's The Thing. *JB*

WANDA
JACKSON
Rockin' with
Wanda!

### Wanda Jackson

★★★★

Rockin' With Wanda

STATE OF ART. **CD**

In replica vinyl gatefold case, this CD collection groups together Jackson's 1960 compilation of early singles, throws in her 1961 album, *There's A Party Going On*, and adds six further 45s. Cue a 30-track rockabilly riot. *PA*

THE JAM
1977

### The Jam

★★★★

'77

UMG. **CD**

Fascinating 4-CD +DVD box tracking the trio's trek from suburban punk outsiders to new wave boss men via their first two long-players and attendant demos, Peel sessions and an unreleased Nashville live set. *PG*

### Season

★★★★

Season

WAH WAH. **LP**

One of the earliest recordings by French singer-songwriter Jay Alanski. Recorded in March 1971, this is a rural acid-folk chamber piece in the spirit of Heron and early Tyrannosaurus Rex, beautifully reissued by the always reliable Wah Wah. *AM*

### Sisters Of Mercy

★★★★

Some Girls Wander By Mistake

RHINO. **LP**

Four sides by Leeds' literate post-punkers prove beneath goth-era posturing lurked a most robust rock band. Spans 1980-83, their first two EPs and industrial burlesque apogee, Temple Of Love. *JB*

The Tubes
THE AM ALBUMS
TUBES LIVE

### The Tubes

★★★★

The A&M Albums

CAROLINE. **CD**

Few '70s American acts were as gonzoid as larger-than-life San Fran outfit The Tubes. Early, proto-punk output is gathered in a clamshell box, offering four studio albums and a live set demonstrating their music was built to last. *PA*

LARRY WALLIS
THE SOUND OF SPEED

### Larry Wallis

★★★★

The Sound Of Speed

PURPLE PYRAMID. **CD/LP**

Shagrat, Pink Fairies and Motörhead guitar hooligan Wallis unearths 10 rarities on this tellingly titled comp. That his '86 single, Leather Forever, sounds as if was lifted from the 7-inch marrs an otherwise effusive collection. *PA*

Krause Johansen, Tom Oldham

# FILTER REISSUES EXTRA

ALEX CHILTON

## Alex Chilton

★★★

A Man Called Destruction

OMNIVORE. CD/DL/LP

Ex-Big Star man returned to Memphis's Ardent Studios for this '95 mix of pop covers and AC originals, recorded with R&B veterans. Seven unissued tracks add to a sympathetic set aimed at Chilton devotees. *PA*

COLOSSEUM
DAUGHTER OF TIME

## Colosseum

★★★

Daughter Of Time

ESOTERIC. CD

Grooving heavily, British jazz-proggers' third also features Chris Farlowe's distinctive soul wail on six tunes, and Jumping Off The Sun, one of the three rough-and-ready bonus tracks. This album's expansiveness is its charm and its flaw. *PA*

## Ian Dury

★★★★

New Boots And Panties!! 40th Anniversary Edition

DEMON. CD/DL/LP

Characterful rock, funk and music hall moves with diamond lyrics from (says Brian Matthew on the live disc) "east London's answer to Bob Dylan." Includes demos, sessions, bonuses. *IH*

## Allen Ginsberg

★★★

Songs Of Innocence And Experience

OMNIVORE. CD/DL

Follow Beat poet Ginsberg's fascination with British romantic William Blake on this handsome anthology curated by author/A&R man Pat Thomas. His readings are as wild and out-there as imaginable. *PA*

## Joe Henderson feat. Alice Coltrane

★★★★★

The Elements

TOP SHELF/CONCORD. LP

Guided by Coltrane on harp, piano, tambura, harmonium, saxman Henderson goes deep into spiritual dronal funk on conceptual cosmic '73 masterpiece. Taken from analogue. *AM*

## Kingdom Come

★★★

Kingdom Come

SWORDFISH. LP

The second 1972 set by Arthur Brown's post-Crazy World cult combo Kingdom Come mixes stoned surrealism with heavy, Hammond-driven workouts. Remastered and repressed on vinyl in gold repro sleeve, the 500 copies are bound to fly. *PA*

## Modern Studies

★★★★

Swell To Great

FIRE. CD/DL/LP

One of our favourite albums of last year gets an international (re)release. Anyone yet to hear this gorgeous set of haunted, yearning folk songs in-thrall to the forlorn wheeze of a Victorian pedal harmonium is in for a treat. *JB*

## Pet Shop Boys

★★★★

Yes/Further Listening: 2008-2010

PARLOPHONE. CD/LP

Their Catalogue series reaches PSB's tenth album (plus 2010 follow-up *Elysium*) newly remastered with two discs of bonuses. With Johnny Marr, Xenomania production and PSB's usual pop hooks. *CP*

THE RADIATORS
TV TUBE HEART

## The Radiators From Space

★★★★

TV Tube Heart 40th Anniversary Edition

ACE. CD

Dublin punks' debut has punchy melodic aggro, authority and media-questioning lyrics. Live rehearsal tapes and a '77 Roxy gig round out the package. *IH*

2
AK HOUSE
Terje Rypdal

## Terje Rypdal

★★★★

Bleak House

ROUND 2. LP

Remastered from original tapes, the debut 1968 LP by the ECM-endorsed Norwegian jazz guitarist (Jan Garbarek on sax; Jon Christensen on drums) sounds like an alternate reality Peter Green, psychedelic blues moving into free-form jazz. *AM*

SLADE ALIVE!

## Slade

★★★★

Slade Alive!

BMG ART OF THE ALBUM. CD/LP

These zero-fat, road-honed, not-a-foot-wrong fan club gig recordings from '72 inspired the Ramones and Kiss and are still a masterclass in uplifting blue collar rock'n'roll fun. "All the drunken louts can shout whatever they like," says Nod. *IH*

THEATRE OF HATE

## Theatre Of Hate

★★★★

He Who Dares Wins

CHERRY RED. CD

Mick Jones-favoured crew's agitated post-punk drama played well on-stage. Here's five live CDs of proof: the two '81/'82 originals, plus two reunion sets, plus the jewel – an unreleased Brussels gig just prior to 1982's fateful split. *KC*

## Various

★★★★

Can You Feel The Force

GROOVE LINE. CD

*John Luongo Disco Mixes*: a set of joyous, infectious remixes by the Boston DJ features his vivacious, percussive work with Melba Moore and remix of The Jacksons' Shake Your Body Down To The Ground. *JB*

Let The Electric Children Play

## Various

★★★★

Let The Electric Children Play

ESOTERIC. CD

Known for '60s folk pioneers (Pentangle), intrepid UK indie Transatlantic's forays to the prog rock/jazz margins play enjoyably on 3-CDs. Gryphon, CMU, Unicorn et al, plus stars-to-be (Rafferty; Oldfield). *KC*

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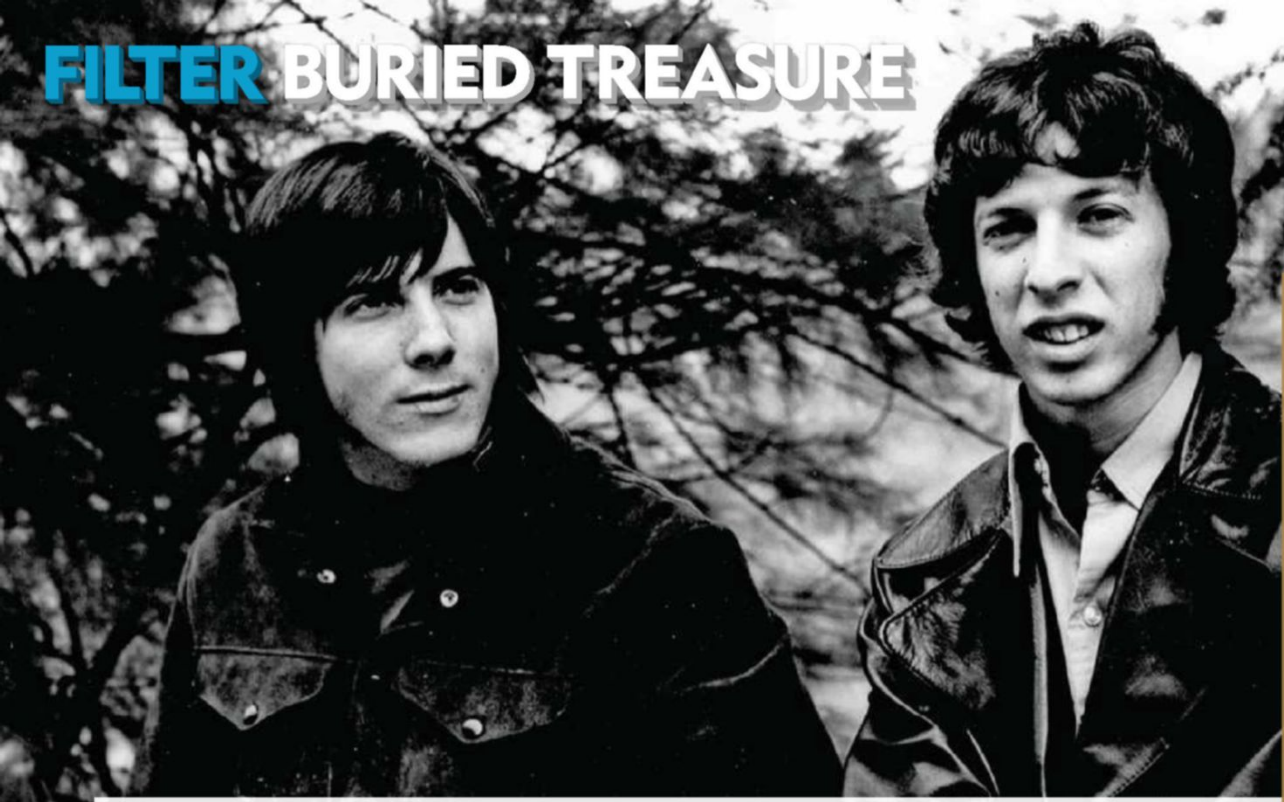
**COMING NEXT MONTH**

Queen, George Martin, Lou Reed, Sharon Jones, Leon Russell, Ane Brun, James Holden, Billy Corgan, Talk Talk, **Courtney Barnett, Kurt Vile and many more…**

**Courtney Barnett: back with her Kurt (Vile) next month.**



**Aiding and duetting: (main) Richard Twice, with Richards Manning (left) and Atkins; (below) the duo with their legal advisor Jerry Dumas (centre).**

# Double fantasy

This month's jewel among the dross: soft-psych-folk greatness born of pain.

## Richard Twice
Richard Twice
PHILIPS, 1970

North Hollywood high school student Richard Atkins was enjoying 1968. With graduation looming, he spent his time listening to Dylan and The Beatles and hanging out at teen-friendly Sunset Strip nitespot It's Boss being entertained by the likes of Sonny And Cher. But everything changed after a road accident in Burbank, riding on the back of his friend's motorbike.

Three days later he awoke in hospital, groggy from morphine, doctors trying to save his right leg. Atkins and a stroke victim in a neighbouring bed talked. "He said, 'If you survive, make sure you live every day to the fullest.' Even to this day I don't know if it was a dream." Soon after, Atkins lost his leg due to gangrene.

He decided to put his mystery guru's advice into practice through music. A friend, Ellen Manning, brought him a guitar, showed him three chords and came by every morning before school to help and encourage. "I just played it all day, every day, non-stop," he says. He was in need of distraction. "I was no longer on morphine so I was in excruciating pain, my leg was just flat-out on fire." Gradually songs emerged, such as God Give Me Strength, a hazy, fingerpicked Nick Drake-like song in which Atkins imagines meeting his creator had he not made it out of hospital. There was no light bulb moment about his songwriting, he says: he simply played and sang obsessively.

Atkins booked into North Hollywood's Valentine Recording Studios. "I listened back to myself and it was awful," he laughs. Gradually, he taught himself to sing. Ellen Manning's older brother, Richard, was a musician and was keen to hear his efforts. Impressed, he asked if he could use the songs to try for a solo contract at Capitol. Instead they began working together, and after a few months, Atkins and Manning had forged a harmonious bond.

Mercury signed them, and less than two years after his near-death experience and conversion to music, Atkins was cutting his debut album with Wrecking Crew players including Monkees guitar aide Louis Shelton, Elvis's drummer Ron Tutt and Electric Prunes bassist Mark Tulin. Atkins calls the sessions "a blur. I was just a dumb kid, I had no clue. I was just recovering from an accident and wasn't cognisant of very much at the time."

The resultant LP exists in both decades, it seems a '60s folk-pop record but with an ambition, orchestration and production that gave a psychedelic undertow to its pastoral songs. Generation '70 threatens garage explosion before a syncopated pop breeziness takes over; the wistful If I Knew You Were The One balances wide-eyed elemental references with a rousing chorus and sweeping strings. But while a worthy companion to similarly-minded 1970 releases such as *Bridge Over Troubled Water* and *All Things Must Pass*, its destiny was more akin to another release that year – Vashti Bunyan's *Just Another Diamond Day* – in barely being noticed enough to be forgotten.

A disastrous showcase gig at the Ash Grove in Los Angeles provides a few good reasons for the album's failure to ignite. As the industry looked on, the pair began to play, but the PA remained silent. Manning tried to fix the amps and said loudly into the mike, "Take it, Rich." Atkins began to panic, and attempted to do a humorous tap dance to diffuse the tension. "I go to do this shuffle and realise I can't," he remembers. "I don't have a leg. It all caved in on me, it was like, Oh shit! I just turned within myself and it felt like someone had pushed me out of a plane without a parachute. I had a panic attack that was so powerful I don't remember the performance or even if we did perform. All I remember is saying to Rick, I'm never performing on-stage again."

> "I REMEMBER SAYING, I'M NEVER PERFORMING ON-STAGE AGAIN."
> Richard Atkins

Three days later Atkins was told there was no budget for a second album. "That was the end of my career," he says. "We were around for about three months between the recording and the failure." Manning and Atkins' relationship didn't exist beyond that night with the exception of meeting up at reunion picnics with old friends, though they did speak at length on the phone in 2005 before Manning passed away from throat cancer in 2006.

Though he'd tried working on a soon-scrapped Goldie Hawn album, and then with Ty Kindell (later to become Billy Zoom of LA punks X), Atkins quit music, scorning the radio and working as a cabinet maker in Santa Barbara for 33 years before retiring. But after a 2007 CD reissue of *Richard Twice*, however, he felt the urge to play and sing again.

Quitting a four-decade smoking habit, he got his voice back into shape, and played open mike nights in his new home, Seattle. A short biographical film, Richard Twice, was made by animator Matthew Salton in 2016: it screened at several film festivals before being premiered by the New York Times. Atkins then performed for the NYT as part of a live Facebook broadcast and interview. Almost 50 years on, he says he's finally hit his stride.

"I go through little panic attacks now and then," he says, "but I'm thinking I can finally do this."

One of the songs he's playing is Mr Higgins, dedicated to the man who told him to seize the day, a lifetime ago in 1968.

*Daniel Dylan Wray*

**CREDITS**
**Tracks:** Generation '70/ My Love Bathes In Silence/ 1.25AM/ Your Love Like Heaven Be/ God Give Me Strength/ What Makes Me Love You Like I Do?/ If I Knew You Were The One/ The Finest Poet/ More Or Less Nothing/ If I Were Strong I'd Move You Mountains/ She Catches Me Running
**Producers:** Alex Hassilev, James Lowe
**Recorded:** Alex Hassilev's Studio, Los Angeles
**Chart Peak:** n/a
**Personnel:** Richard Atkins, Richard Manning (gtr, vcls), Colin Cameron, Mark Tulin (bass), Kirby Johnson (string arranger), John Bahler (brass arranger), Malcolm Eisensohn, Ron Tutt (drms), David Cohen, Drake Levin, Louis Shelton (gtrs), Alex Hassilev, Larry Knechtel (keybds), Rusty Young (pdl stl gtr), Gary Coleman (perc)
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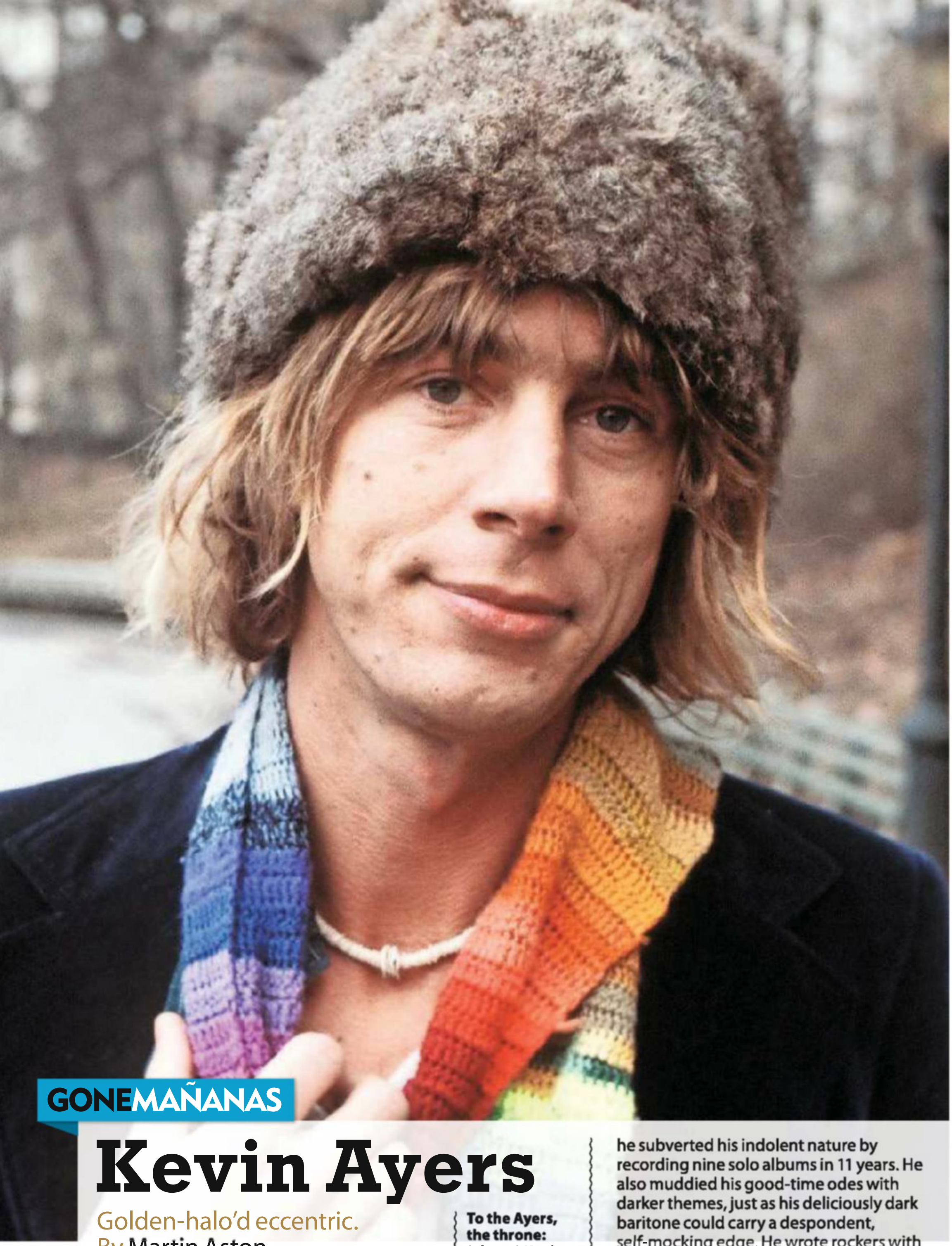


To the Ayers, the throne: (above) Kevin channels the politburo and Tom Baker's Doctor Who; (far right) in the early '70s.

**GONEMAÑANAS**

# Kevin Ayers

## Golden-halo'd eccentric.

By Martin Aston.

"Let's drink some wine/And have a good time." With this naked ode to pleasure, the title track of 1972's *Whatevershebringswesing*, Kevin Ayers nailed his colours: an acknowledged lush who claimed he lacked ambition, who sought sun, sea and escape from the dirty business of work, a blond charmer who embraced the Noël Coward colonial stereotype.

As you'd expect from the co-founder of Brit psych pioneers The Soft Machine, the whole truth was more complicated. Born in Kent and raised a lonely, misunderstood child in British Malaya, Ayers returned in time for the '60s' teenage revolution. Expelled from various schools, he fell in with Robert Wyatt and Mike Ratledge. Ayers later admitted he only took up music so he could hang out with his chums, "the only family I'd ever found."

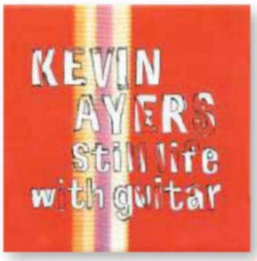
The Soft Machine included Australian beatnik Daevid Allen, who was denied a visa to stay in Britain and play on the band's debut LP. Soon after, Ayers absconded to Allen's side in Ibiza, a hippy reborn, though he subverted his indolent nature by recording nine solo albums in 11 years. He also muddied his good-time odes with darker themes, just as his deliciously dark baritone could carry a despondent, self-mocking edge. He wrote rockers with a Velvets-y grit or soul-blues infusion too; for someone untrained, he was remarkably good at gorgeous melody and hooks.

However, Ayers regularly capsized his chances of mainstream popularity by disappearing to Europe, or releasing sub-standard albums. As for the wonders of wine, in an otherwise rousing Shouting In A Bucket Blues, he sang "Sometimes I get too drunk/I feel so goddamned low." He eventually settled in Spain, then France, at a remove from the music industry, from whence he released only four (moribund) albums in 11 years, then just one during his final 23. Ayers died in 2013, in his sleep, aged 68, a golden boy who surrendered his glow.

> "FOR SOMEONE UNTRAINED, HE WAS REMARKABLY GOOD AT GORGEOUS MELODY."

**CAST YOUR VOTES!**

This month you chose your Top 10 Kevin Ayers LPs. Next month we want your Top 10 LPs by The Temptations. Send your selections to www.mojo4music.com or e-mail your Top 10 to mojo@bauermedia.co.uk with the subject 'How To Buy Temptations' and we'll print the best comments.



### 10 Kevin Ayers Still Life With Guitar

FNAC 1992, DOWNLOAD £7.99

**You Say: "One last update from the Mediterranean café bar before years of silence… if only he'd done more." Steve Joyce, via e-mail**

Ayers' '80s were also scarred by heroin and failed attempts to co-opt the times with electronic-flecked, hollow productions. But he finally righted himself, returning to more unadorned natural settings for his songs, among which Something In Between and Ghost Train were his best in a decade. Also reborn was Ayers' ability to corral a starry cast-list, including BJ Cole, Mike Oldfield and Danny Thompson. Still, Ayers revisited two vintage tunes – a hushed Thank You Very Much, soul-blues burner When Your Parents Go To Sleep – and with two instrumentals on top, he only had six new songs. He wasn't out of the woods yet.

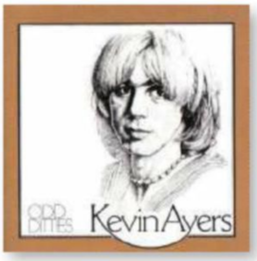
### 4 Kevin Ayers The Confessions Of Dr Dream And Other Stories

ISLAND 1974, DOWNLOAD £7.99

**You Say: "Played this record constantly when it came out in '74. Nice sleeve too…" Jan Thelin, MOJO Facebook**

Ayers' fifth album was his best chance for mainstream invasion. New label Island provided the budget and ambitious producer Rupert Hine, who added synths and tricks to widen the screen: not just snappy funk, languid blues and wailing rock (Soft Machine's Why Are We Sleeping, renamed It Begins With A Blessing/Once I Awakened/But It Ends With A Curse) but sinister gothic drama too on the side-long four-part title track, beginning with the Ayers/Nico duet Irreversible Neural Damage. Ayers capped it with a Rainbow Theatre concert co-starring Nico, Eno and John Cale, but the album failed to even dent the Top 75.

Getty Images (3)



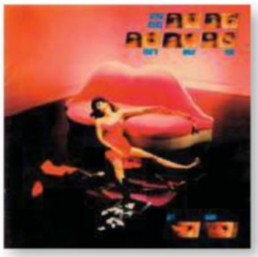
## 9 Kevin Ayers

### Odd Ditties

HARVEST 1976, USED FROM £14.17

**You Say: "A cash-in grab-bag of songs. True to lackadaisical form, they're all wonderful." Keith Turner, via e-mail**

After Ayers left EMI/Harvest in 1974, the label responded with an endearing singles/rarities compilation. All-time fan faves Lady Rachel and Stranger In Blue Suede Shoes had been re-recorded as singles; fellow 45s Butterfly Dance – poppy, funky, jazzy – and Singing A Song In The Morning are prime buried treasure. Otherwise, *Odd Ditties* is dominated by charming novelties such as Take Me To Tahiti and its insanely catchy A-side Caribbean Moon, whose video – starring three practically naked male 'tropical' dancers – resembled a Python sketch. Not once did Ayers break the Top 75. Quite possibly his mix of psychedelic gravitas and throwaway tunes simply confused.



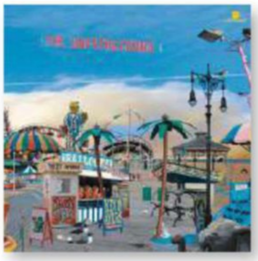
## 8 Kevin Ayers

### That's What You Get Babe

HARVEST 1980, DOWNLOAD £8.99

**You Say: "Ayers gives in and attempts to go contemporary. The quality of the songs makes his move a success." Catherine Berry, via e-mail**

After 1978's lacklustre *Rainbow Takeaway*, Ayers moved to the bohemian enclave of Deià on Mallorca's northern coast. Agreeing to Harvest's insistence on a glossier sound – the 'starlet' cover image was another move forced on him to achieve crossover – he met the challenge head on with a bag of rollicking rock-pop songs, stoked by sunshine and good times, making this his most relaxed record. I'm So Tired filches the intro from the Velvets' I'll Be Your Mirror, prolonging his Nico obsession, while guitar sidekick/drug buddy Ollie Halsall provides inspired solos on Where Do I Go From Here and Idiots.



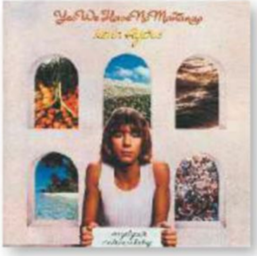
## 7 Kevin Ayers

### The Unfairground

LO-MAX 2007, DOWNLOAD £7.99

**You Say: "I just couldn't believe it when this came out – his voice was remarkably unchanged." Robert Brown, via e-mail**

"I can't write songs unless I am in love," Ayers said in 2008. But it took the intervention of mega-fans – Ladybug Transistor, Teenage Fanclub, Euros Childs – to help Ayers make a comeback after 15 wilderness years, as he addressed "lost love, lost feelings, lost sensibilities". Not surprisingly, the weight of regret and advancing age/alcoholism meant an unusually fragile and wan Ayers, matched by the empathic restraint of his backing band, except for the rollicking chorus of Brainstorm: "Shout, scream, give me back my dream, I need one to get through the day." All the sadder for being his last hurrah.


Yes We Have No Mañanas
Kevin Ayers

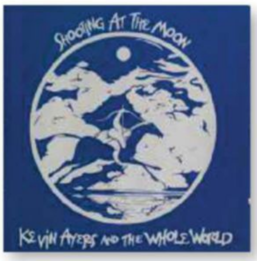
## 6 Kevin Ayers

### Yes We Have No Mañanas (So Get Your Mañanas Today)

HARVEST 1976, DOWNLOAD £7.99

**You Say: "His worst-titled LP ever. Still love it though." Colin Williams, via e-mail**

In 1976, Ayers claimed he'd played most shows "boozy and numb", and had delivered his first sub-par (and panned) album, *Sweet Deceiver*. Yet despite the album's title – sneakily poignant, masquerading as silly – Ayers seriously upped his game, abandoning the more eccentric adventuring of old to underline his capacity for effortless melodic carousing. Yet, negating that album title, and swinging numbers like Ballad Of Mr Snake, the melancholy is unmissable: Star and Mr Cool are cynical attacks on fame, and the key line is "only sadness seems to last forever" – ironically slotted into euphoric finale Blue.


Shooting At The Moon
Kevin Ayers and the Whole World

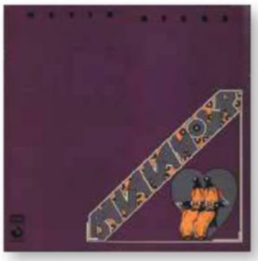
## 5 Kevin Ayers And The Whole World

### Shooting At The Moon

HARVEST, 1970, DOWNLOAD £9.99

**You Say: "Strong, poisonous and praiseworthy." Napo Camassa III, MOJO Facebook**

Having kept a lid on psychedelic excess on his debut album, Ayers tapped the maverick Soft Machine motherlode for the follow-up, with new band The Whole World built on jazz saxophonist Lol Coxhill, classical keyboardist David Bedford and 16-year-old Mike Oldfield on guitar. While creatively valid, cut-up collage Colores Para Dolores and the improvised Underwater and Pisser Dans Un Violon (at eight minutes) have distracted from the sheer beauty and verve of the rest: dreamy chanson May I, jaunty Bridget St John duet The Oyster And The Flying Fish, the blistering title track, the loony calypso/rhumba Clarence In Wonderland.



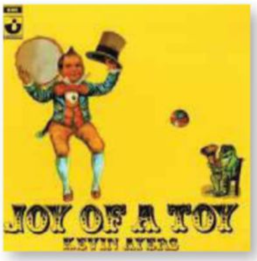
## 3 Kevin Ayers

### Bananamour

HARVEST 1973, DOWNLOAD £9.99

**You Say: "*Bananamour* is underrated and has some of his best lyrical work intertwined with amazing sparks from an impressive gaggle of guests." Gandoo Spear, MOJO Facebook**

He had the hots for bananas: following his Banana Follies revue, Ayers parodied the title of Daevid Allen's album *Bananamoon* for his own. Ayers also had the hots for Nico, who'd guest on his next album; here, she just inspired the lengthy psych-swirl Decadence. In typically schizophrenic mode, Ayers also paid tribute to old mucker Syd Barrett in Oh! Wot A Dream, one of his odd Bonzo Dog-style ditties, complete with percussive duck quack and cow bell. But mostly he stressed his vibrant rock-blues side (Steve Hillage plays guitar in Shouting In A Bucket Blues), while Hymn is a contender for the title of best Ayers ballad.



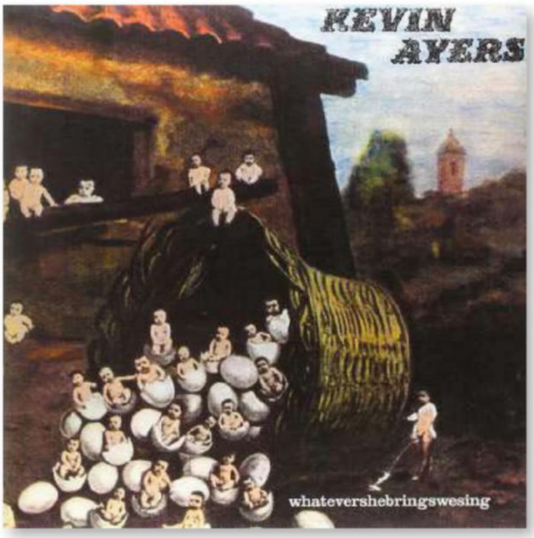
## 2 Kevin Ayers

### Joy Of A Toy

HARVEST 1969, DOWNLOAD £9.99

**You Say: "*Joy Of A Toy* for its eccentric English jazziness and surreal humour. Some catchy tunes too… Ayers isn't folk like John Martyn or sombre like Nick Drake." Miles David, MOJO Facebook**

Ayers' debut was named after one of his Soft Machine songs, but that was in the form of free-form noodling, whereas the new song Joy Of A Toy Continued was happiness bottled in a la-la-la sing-along. The album burst forth with the glee of independence, where Ayers could set out his eclectic stall: dream ballads (Girl On A Swing; Lady Rachel), baroque (Town Feeling), swarthy psych-pop (Stop This Train), eccentric offcuts (Oleh Oleh Bandu Badong, with a chorus in Malay). The breezy finale All This Crazy Gift Of Time is especially poignant given how time eventually ran out on him. He'd never sound this carefree again.



## 1 Kevin Ayers

### Whatevershebringswesing

HARVEST 1972, DOWNLOAD £7.92

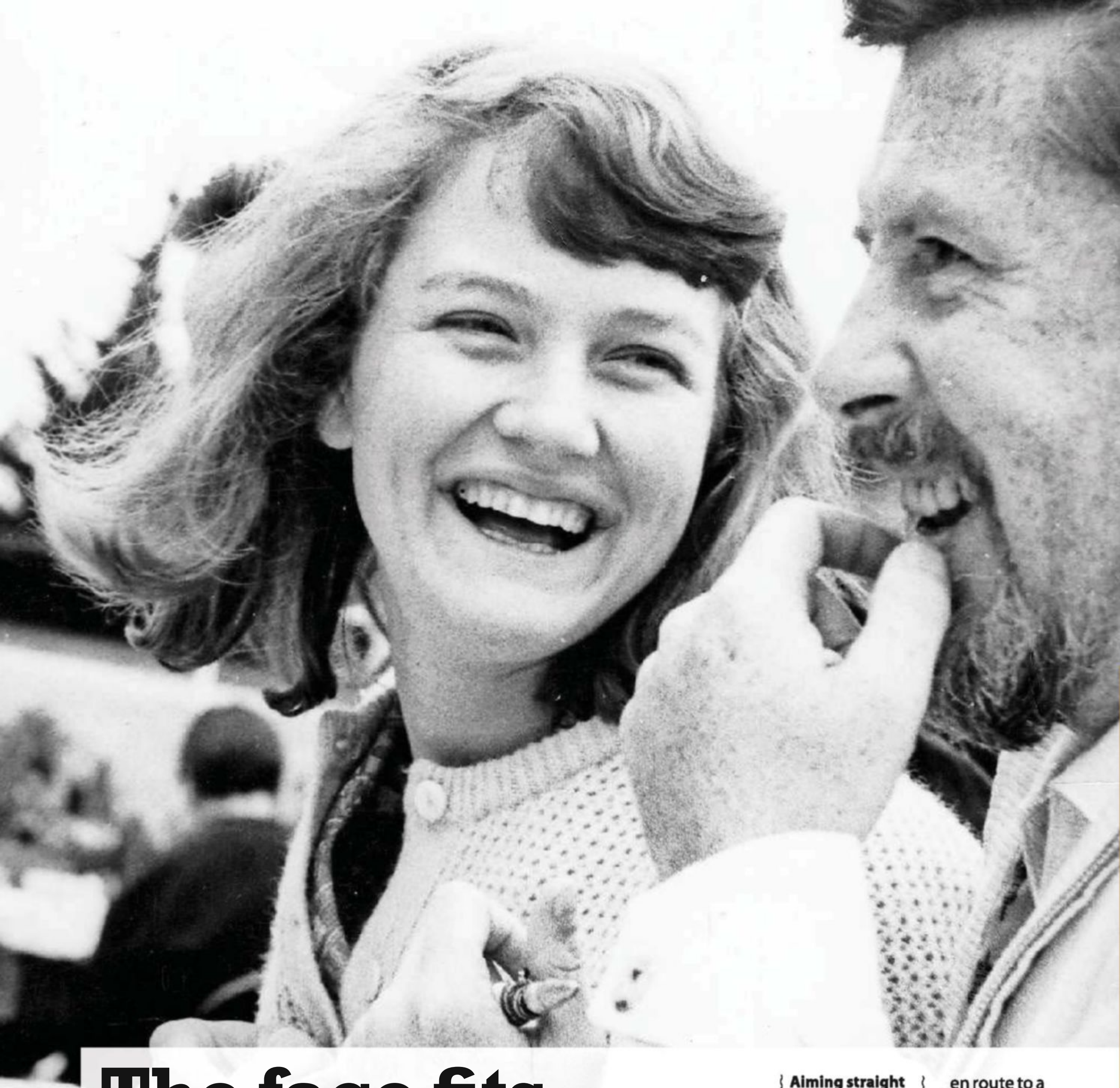
**You Say: "The perfect balance of weirdness and whimsy." Conor Bendle, MOJO Facebook**

His third album shades Ayers' debut by dint of its expanding ambition: orchestral suite There Is Loving/Among Us, hall-of-mirrors reverb fest Song From The Bottom Of A Well and the title track's blissful sunburnt lull (Oldfield's bass solo is a thing of beauty) were better uses of The Whole World's progressive chops than *Shooting At The Moon*'s avant-dabbling. Stranger In Blue Suede Shoes is a fan favourite, a rockin' showcase for Ayers' basso profundo, while the drowsy Champagne Cowboy Blues celebrates good times: "I don't care how or why/As long as I'm high."

## NOW DIG THIS

JUNE 1, 1974
KEVIN AYERS JOHN CALE ENO NICO

Of the live albums, the best is *Singing The Bruise* (Band Of Joy, 1996), which collects 1970-71 BBC sessions and showcases The Whole World and the short-lived Kevin Ayers & Archibald (bassist Archie Legget) duo. *June 1, 1974* (Island, 1974) features five Ayers tracks recorded at London's Rainbow with the rest by his guests John Cale, Nico and Brian Eno. The only book is Kevin Ayers: August 16th 2013 Deià, by Susan Lomas (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2014). Detailing the events leading up to Ayers' funeral in 100 pages, it's not the biography he deserves. There's no official DVD, so create your own playlist from YouTube footage.



# The face fits

From Lomax, Leadbelly and Broonzy… to Ewan MacColl, feminism and a hit song. By **Colin Irwin.**

## First Time Ever: A Memoir

★★★★

Peggy Seeger

FABER & FABER. £20

Peggy Seeger's life is the stuff of a rip-roaring blockbuster. A colourful upbringing involving cameos from some of the great and the good of the folk music world – Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Alan Lomax, Big Bill Broonzy, Libba Cotten et al – on to surreal adventures across America and Europe, Russia and China, sexual intrigue, music, politics… and lots of all of it.

Often demeaningly referenced as Pete Seeger's half-sister or Ewan MacColl's partner, she has – uniquely – been a key influence on folk music on both sides of the Atlantic, and is a fine banjo player and remarkable songwriter, who's also stirred passions and inspired political campaigns, notably the women's movement.

With a delicious eye for detail, she recounts it all with nonchalance and a wry philosophy. Her "progressive" father Charlie – a prominent folklorist who helped set up the Library of Congress Archive of American Folk Song – is described as a man who could still do handstands in his nineties; her mother Ruth as a "1920s feminist who read Perry Mason detective stories and drank oceans of black coffee". And her future mother-in-law Betty "the size of tuppence, all tongue and temper".

Hard on the heels of Jean R Freedman's rather more academic Peggy Seeger: A Life Of Music, Love & Politics (University of Illinois Press) – with which Peggy clearly co-operated and generously references – this is an illuminating, witty, revelatory and unflinchingly candid account, presented in vivid vignettes and nonchalant anecdotes, often funny, sometimes shocking (notably describing an abortion). Where Freedman painstakingly analyses the content and musical influence of almost every track she ever recorded, Seeger whimsically breezes through the music, barely pausing for breath as she recalls her most famous songs The Ballad Of Springhill and I'm Gonna Be An Engineer, and debuting First Time Ever I Saw Your Face, which ultimately brought financial relief courtesy of Roberta Flack.

Her life changed when – at the request of Alan Lomax to play banjo on a TV show – she diverted to London while en route to a logging camp in Finland with an Israeli boy. She wryly describes the fateful "fairy tale" meeting with Ewan MacColl: "I dreamt of being kissed by a prince, but he wouldn't be 44, married with a son and a pregnant wife."

**Aiming straight for the heart: Peggy Seeger and Ewam MacColl at the Newport Folk Festival, 1960.**

PEGGY SEEGER
First Time Ever
A Memoir

"SEXUAL INTRIGUE, MUSIC, POLITICS… AND LOTS OF IT."

She talks of her long partnership with MacColl with warmth and gratitude without seeking to gloss over the insecurities and paranoia which affected them both as they struggled to hold it together amid society's disapproval, financial hardship and artistic pressures, while fighting for principles, political causes and often the authorities too. There's no self-pity, either, as she talks about their perceived role in the British folk revival, the contentious dictums instituted at their Singers Club and the hurt as their Critics group fell apart.

Then, in the post-MacColl years after his death in 1989, she guides us through the trials and tribulations leading to her Indian summer of awards, tours and critical acclaim… falling in love with her new partner Irene, some unspeakably bad gigs and the passions that still clearly burn brightly in her. "I was born joyful and will probably die troubled," she says.

### WHAT WE'VE LEARNT

- At 23, Peggy Seeger (above, 1953 high school yearbook) was living in Paris, barred from Britain and pregnant by Ewan MacColl, who was then married to another. Scottish folk singer Alex Campbell married Peggy to give her legal status and took her to MacColl in London saying, "Here's yer woman."
- Feminist anthem I'm Gonna Be An Engineer was written by Seeger for a Festival Of Fools revue show in 1971. When women's groups started asking her to sing her feminist songs at their meetings she had to confess it was the only one she had.
- Peggy was unable to sing First Time Ever I Saw Your Face without breaking down for several years after Ewan MacColl's death.

Courtesy of Peggy Seeger: Fist Time Ever (2)

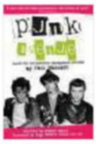
## Punk Avenue – Inside The New York City Underground 1972-1982

★★★★

Phil Marcade

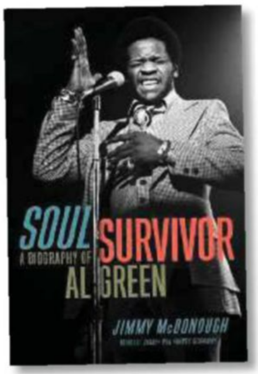
THREE ROOMS. £13.95

**Beautifully observed memoir from key early CBGB / Max's Kansas City player.**



Phil Marcade, singer with The Senders, was one of the most entertaining voices heard in McNeil and McCain's NYC oral punk history Please Kill Me. He was frequently right where the action was, and recounts the stories here in his autobiography with a sharp eye and killer punchlines – whether hanging out at New York Dolls rehearsals, writing the French lyrics in Blondie's hit Denis, or attending a loft party when a scruffy leather-jacketed band set up in a corner and started playing (the first ever Ramones gig). Then there was the time he suggested that his friend move to England since she wasn't happy in Manhattan, recalled with deadpan humour: "I apologise to the Sex Pistols for having convinced Nancy Spungen to go to London." A suave evocation of a lost, grittier New York, as you might expect from someone whose favourite Mink DeVille song is Venus Of Avenue D.

*Max Décharné*



## Soul Survivor: A Biography Of Al Green

★★★★

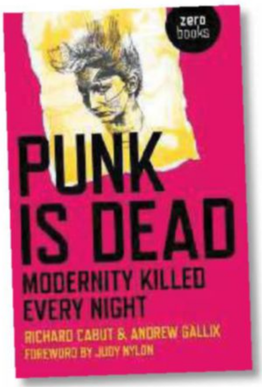
Jimmy McDonough

DA CAPO. £25

**The many Al Greens revealed.**

Veteran biographer Jimmy McDonough has wrestled difficult icons before – infamously Neil Young – and Reverend Al Green brought his own challenges, as well as sui generis story: an unhappy childhood to status as the '70s' greatest soul star and a simultaneously sacred and profane personal life. Green declined to be interviewed, forcing the author to rely on secondary sources. That hurdle reveals a subject with a shifting definition of truth when the singer consistently makes statements he later contradicts. As in his earlier books, McDonough ignores mainstream rules of journalism: he not only speaks in the first person, but breaks the fourth wall and talks directly to the reader, in one instance explaining why he's veering from the narrative. By combining wildly imaginative prose with thorough research and musical and historical expertise, the scribe – and his compelling subject – hold one's attention happily hostage.

*Michael Simmons*



## Punk Is Dead: Modernity Killed Every Night

★★★★

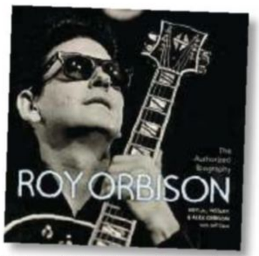
Edited by Andrew Gallix and Richard Cabut

ZERO. £17.99

**Academic reactions to punk four decades on.**

Punk's power lies in its highly fragmented legacy: on the one hand, nostalgic weekends in Blackpool, on the other, key critical thinking as collated here. Editors Richard Cabut (formerly of positive punks Brigandage) and Andrew Gallix, founder of 3:AM Magazine, corral some of punk's finest theorists to document the "blank zone" in which a scene blossomed; early chroniclers such as Jon Savage and Jonh Ingham remind that it was a series of cultural seeds scattered, trigger points for what followed. Penny Rimbaud of Crass, psycho-geographer Tom Vague, Barney Hoskyns, Judy Nylon, Simon Reynolds and late theorist Mark Fisher all cast an academic eye over punk, finding it in Parisian art galleries, squat-land, the Angry Brigade, conceptual non-bands (Chrissie Hynde's The Moors Murderers, Julian Cope's Nova Mob), jive-talking McLaren wannabes, proto-Dadaist Arthur Cravan, French Situationism and German Romanticism. The subtext here suggests that punk was an outward-looking movement against the end of the British Empire.

*Ben Myers*



## The Authorized Roy Orbison

★★★

Wesley Orbison, Roy Orbison Jr. and Alex Orbison, with Jeff Slate

CENTER STREET. £22.99

**Sincere and agreeable biography by the inimitable singer's offspring gets the story told.**

The word "authorized" in a biography title, and the knowledge that said bio is penned by family members, usually provides good cause for scepticism. Not surprisingly, Roy Orbison comes off predominantly unscathed in this account written by his three sons and a collaborator – what little venom exists is usually directed at others. But that's not to imply that untold juicy parts are left out. From a majority of accounts, Orbison was a peach of a guy, not prone to tabloid-worthy outbursts like some of his friends, and so if this straightforward tale is more informative than salacious, that's no reason to assume there are holes. From his early days through the Sun and Monument Records years, the '70s revival, Wilburys, et al, the book – while perhaps short on critical insights into Orbison's artistry – offers plenty of good old story-telling in a breezy, readable tone that'll make you like the man even more than you already do.

*Jeff Tamarkin*

## Sticky Fingers: The Life And Times Of Jann Wenner And Rolling Stone Magazine

★★★★

Joe Hagan

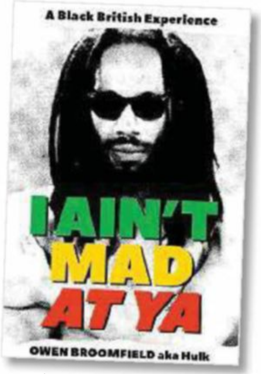
CANONGATE. £20

**A surprisingly honest portrait of a controversial rock publisher.**

Sticky Fingers
Joe Hagan

Rolling Stone mogul Jann Wenner took a significant risk in providing author Joe Hagan with unprecedented access and letting the author work almost entirely independently. Though Wenner kept some information off limits, it's hard to imagine how this book could be more revealing. Hagan strikes a perfect high/low balance, weighing insightful sociology with delightful gossip. He smartly calibrates the many contradictions of Wenner, a man named for the two-faced Janus head by his sharp-tongued, lesbian mother. At his magazine's peak, Wenner wooed and betrayed stars like John Lennon, Mick Jagger, David Geffen and Paul Simon. He took investment money from the music industry, then assigned scathing portraits of its most valuable players. The pages sizzle with the sex and drug-fuelled tales of Hunter Thompson, Annie Leibovitz and Joe Eszterhas. Yet, the through-line remains the complex relationship between Jann and Jane Wenner, a couple who love and exploit each other in equal measure. Wenner's gay identity, not made public until 1995, provides deep insight into his sensibility, resulting in a profile with real bite.

*Jim Farber*



## I Ain't Mad At Ya: A Black British Experience

★★★

Owen Broomfield AKA Hulk

TANGENT. £9.99

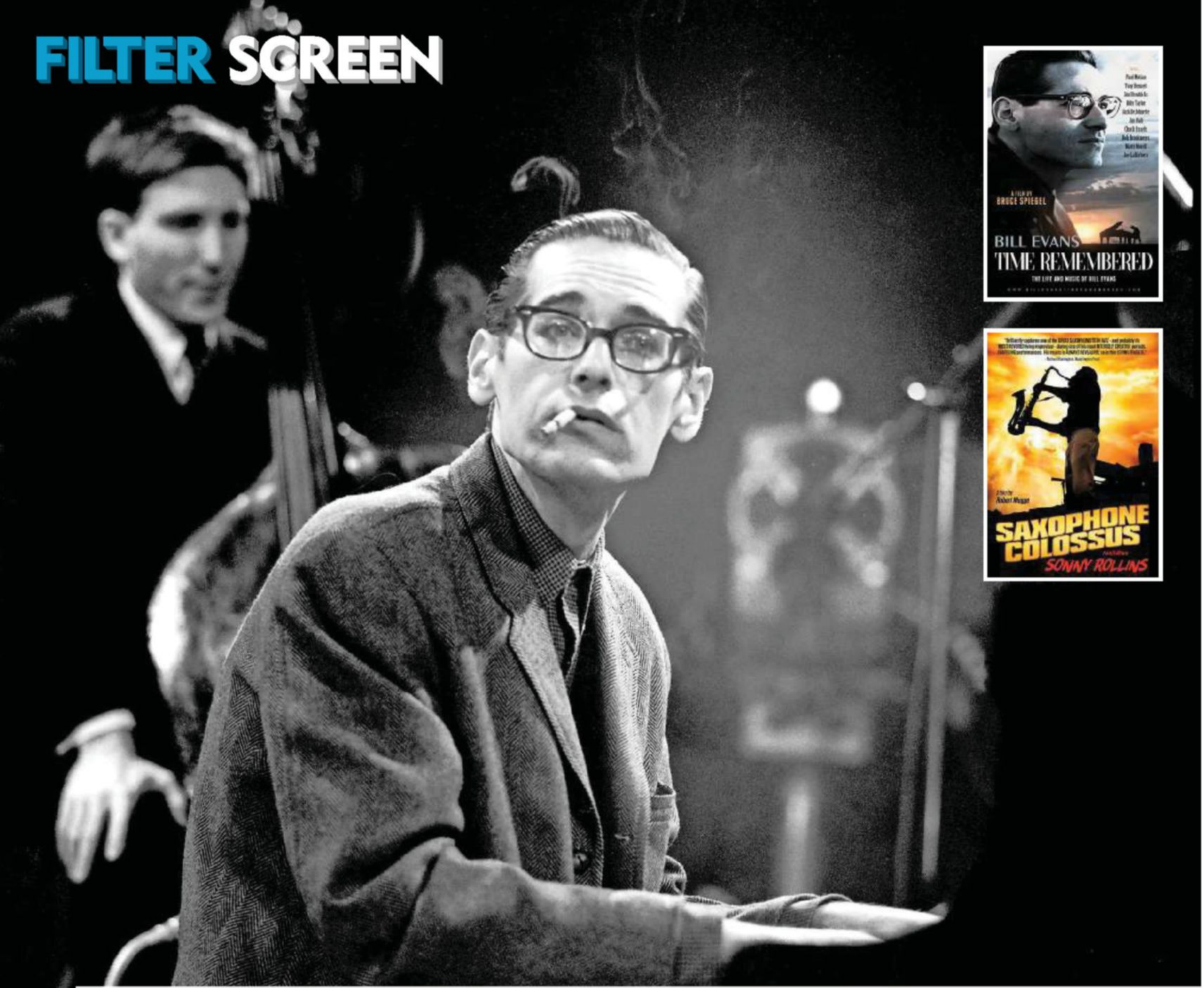
**Likeable memoir by unsung reggae keyboardist.**

In the late '70s, the Midlands gave rise to a plethora of underground reggae bands, typically formed by young black men whose parents left Jamaica in the 1950s or early '60s. Owen 'Hulk' Broomfield was keyboardist in a popular Lozells-based outfit called Unity, and in this casually related account he gets to the heart of how reggae was crucial in the formation of a black British identity. After suffering racial discrimination at school and gaining early music experience in church, Hulk drifted into reggae and its culture of sound systems, ganja and Rastafari. There are plenty of ups and downs along the way, and as the band forges its reputation they rub shoulders with Steel Pulse, support UB40 on a prominent date and gain the attention of Prince Charles, no less, who crowns them winners of his inaugural National Music Competition in 1981. An entertaining and enlightening read.

*David Katz*

**Sacred, profane and contradictory: Al Green, "the '70s' greatest soul star".**

Getty Images



# Blue notes

Contrasting portraits of two jazz masters – one life-affirming; the other truly tragic, writes Charles Waring.

**Undercurrents: Bill Evans, live on BBC2's Jazz 625 series, March 19, 1965; (below) Sonny Rollins, early 1960s.**

## Time Remembered – The Life And Music Of Bill Evans

★★★★

DISTRIJAZZ. DVD/DL

## Saxophone Colossus Featuring Sonny Rollins

★★★

WIENERWORLD. DVD/BR/DL

Though they were contemporaries and yet never recorded together, there are two common threads that link jazz greats Sonny Rollins and Bill Evans. Both were genius improvisers who established an original style (Rollins on saxophone, Evans on piano) and both were heroin addicts. Rollins, though, who got incarcerated on Rikers Island in 1951 for committing an armed robbery to fund his drug habit, was able to get clean in 1955 and stay that way.

For Evans it was a different story and the tone of Emmy-winning director Bruce Spiegel's superlative documentary is shaped by the pianist's lifelong addiction to narcotics (in the '70s, cocaine replaced heroin as Evans' favourite tipple). As a result, Spiegel's film, which features 16 interviewees (including singer Tony Bennett, with whom Evans collaborated in the '70s, and Debby Evans, the pianist's niece who inspired his most famous composition, Waltz For Debby), is darker, deeper and more finely-etched.

The director's forensic examination of Evans' psyche reveals the personal tragedies that influenced the downward trajectory of the pianist's life. First, his bassist, Scott Le Faro, was killed in a car crash aged 25; later, his first wife, Ellaine, a junkie, and his beloved older brother Harry, who was a schizophrenic, both committed suicide. Factor into this two failed marriages, and it's clear why Evans slipped into a deep, suffocating state of depression he found difficult to escape.

> **"EVANS SLIPPED INTO A DEEP DEPRESSION HE FOUND DIFFICULT TO ESCAPE."**

Sonny Rollins, on the other hand, has led more of a charmed life since casting aside his demons early on in his career. Robert Mugge's 1986 documentary, now remastered in 4K, is much more informal and has a small cast of interviewees (Rollins, his late wife Lucille, and three eminent US jazz critics) talking directly to the camera from a New York park bench. Punctuated by complete in-concert performances from Rollins (captured live in a sculpted quarry and also premiering a symphonic work in Japan), it was intended as more of a living portrait of the then-56-year-old saxophonist than a detailed biography.

While the Rollins film is bright, colourful and full of vitality, the Evans doc is decidedly elegiac. And given that it's about a pianist who lived up to the archetypal image of a doomed romantic artist who suffered for his art, that's not surprising, perhaps. His *raison d'être* was encapsulated in his final words to Tony Bennett a few months before his death at aged 51. "Just go with truth and beauty and forget the rest," Evans said, paraphrasing John Keats's famous lines.

If Evans was a poet of the piano, then Rollins, now 87, has proved over the decades that he is a superbly-skilled artisan whose commitment and dedication to his craft has been just as intense and all-consuming as Evans's – though, thankfully, he didn't have to sacrifice his life to prove it.

Getty Images (2

OZZY OSBOURNE TONY IOMMI GEEZER BUTLER

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# Island nightlife

At the Howlin Fling festival in the Hebrides, Anna Wood finds a world of bucolic bliss and rave euphoria.

## Howlin Fling Festival

### Isle of Eigg

It's a long way to Eigg – for anyone, really, unless you reside on Rhum or in Arisaig. You take the Caledonian sleeper or a flight to Glasgow or you just drive, and then there's an hour on a ferry before you land on this satisfyingly egg-shaped island of the Inner Hebrides, home to festival organisers Johnny Lynch (aka Pictish Trail, and head of Lost Map records) and the redoubtable Sarah Boden.

Not only is the trek worth it, it makes the whole thing better. A few hundred of us have made the journey and now we are nestled, isolated, safe, remote, in a place of seals and whisky, beards and fern, rich green and grey-blue, moonlight shadow and bonfire parties.

And music. This weekend we get a double rave whammy with Jon Hopkins headlining on Friday night and James Holden on the Saturday, both playing in a small marquee behind the local community hall. Hopkins immerses us in an unforgiving, strangely reassuring world of hypnotic dance. Holden is all lolloping jazz rave, with saxophone and trumpet, a load of percussion and occasionally a bagpipey screech on the top. It's a juicy, generous set that engages the crowd in all kinds of ways, from gurners at the front to a smiling woman on a chair at the back with a compliant corgi on her lap.

The bucolic bliss here makes an excellent setting for some good weird shit. Early on Friday, Devonanon & Monoganon – two men in boiler suits with face paint, one in a Scouse 'calm down' wig – emit electronic wails and glitchy loops, answer imaginary phone calls, eat French pastries, and generally create an unsettling, compelling piece of performance art that you can (sort of) dance to. One of them (John B McKenna of Monoganon) heads into the crowd yelling "assassinate your government"; the other one (Richard Greenan AKA Devon Loch), a slightly Dada version of Andrew Fearn, Sleaford Mods' laptop man.

Fránçois & The Atlas Mountains bring more straight-forwardly good vibes, filling the marquee with a mass of cheering, dancing punters, eliciting crowdsurfing and bringing full joy with their rumbling pop that has wig-out guitar and a delicious feel of highlife.

With his glittery cheeks and his strong, clear soft voice, Pictish Trail also brings wig-out joy to the marquee; he's wired and delighted in the way you might be when you headline your own festival. There is wonderful, tumbling racket, there is a touch of Wings, there is swoon and brawn. And at the end there is genuine disco frenzy with the delirious one-two hit of Brow Beaten (by his former band Silver Columns) and Winter Home Disco.

Seamus Fogarty plays a kind of self-mythologising country but with a very light touch in songs like Train To Mexico, and slightly daft electronic melodies in tracks like Ducks & Drakes. It's also just very good songwriting. He's joined on-stage by Emma Smith, who also plays that afternoon with Serafina Steer, once a harp-playing soloist, now frontwoman for Bas Jan. They're an excellent, Slitsy trio with Korg synthesizer, bass, drums and violin between them, and an ace song called King Of The Holloway Road.

On Sunday, Ed Dowie plays in the hall, which has become a suitably church-like space with sunlight dappling in. Turns out Dowie is a gentle siren, calling us to our psychic demise on the perilous rocks of our hangovers. Between his beautiful and strange songs, he stumbles into streams of consciousness which go far beyond sleepy ramblings and become a glimpse into the comedown abyss, only delicately covered by a scrap of humour. When poet-musician-mate Alabaster dePlume joins him on Why Do You Live In France, it adds a layer of pleasing menace. Dowie's Garfunkelly vocals, these sweet ethereal songs, the reverby echoes and the fairground melodies serve to expand your own delicate, otherworldly but weirdly enjoyable state.

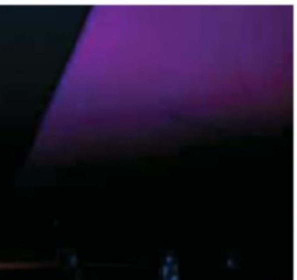
The last gig of the weekend, on Sunday afternoon, is from noisy, ragey Meursault. Frontman Neil Pennycook smashes his guitar, strides off, has a word with himself and heads back to lead the crowd in a lumbering, assonant rendition of I Do Like To Be Beside The Seaside. Then he says, meekly, "I can't play any more songs, I broke my guitar."

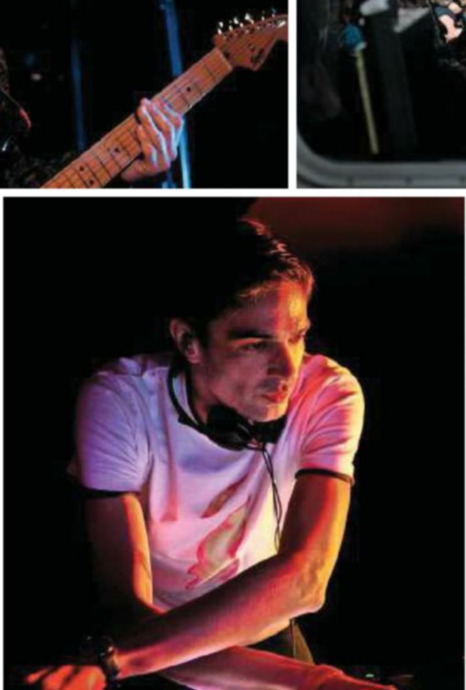
Doesn't matter though. They've finished their unsettling, cathartic set. Johnny Lynch jumps up to give him a hug and announces: "Lifts to the beach for a party in half an hour!" Soon we're all packed onto trailers and flatbed trucks, heading into the sunset with the remains of our red wine and whisky.

**Coming out of their shells: these are Eigg men (main) The Pictish Trail's tumbling racket; (centre, from left) Fránçois & The Atlas Mountains; on the ferry; Devonanon; festival-goer, lightly poached; (bottom, from left) Pictish man Johnny Lynch; the view; Jon Hopkins; Seamus Fogarty, just very good songwriting; pleasing menace and sax appeal from Alabaster dePlume.**

"ED DOWIE CALLS US TO OUR PSYCHIC DEMISE ON THE ROCKS OF OUR HANG-OVERS."

Eoin Carey (9), C Campbell





**SETLIST**
Chain Of Keys / Ministry Of Defence / Community Of Hope / Shame /All & Everyone / Let England Shake / Words That Maketh Murder / The Glorious Land / Dear Darkness / White Chalk / In The Dark Places / The Wheel / Ministry Of Social Affairs / 50 Ft Queenie / Down By The Water / To Bring You My Love / River Anacostia

# Hope and glory

Polly Jean transcends a wet weekend in Brecon Beacons with funereal funkiness. By Ben Thompson.

## P.J. Harvey

### Green Man Festival, Usk Valley, Wales

Cometh the hour, cometh the woman. As the traditional last night squalls test the crowd's resilience in the run up to P.J. Harvey's Sunday headlining slot, the question is how will the stately summation of Polly Jean's post-imperial phase, which so wowed indoor venues last autumn, translate to the storm-lashed open spaces of the Mountain Stage?

From the moment Mick Harvey, James Johnston, John Parish, Terry Edwards and the other *eminences grise* of Harvey's nine-strong goth orchestra make their grand entrance – parading on-stage like so many circus elephants to Chain Of Keys' sombre, martial drum-beat – it's clear the answer to that question will be "very well indeed". Tonight, these venerable virtuosi will beat the bounds of Harvey's recent repertoire with the diligent fervour of Orange marchers without sectarian portfolio and the funereal funkiness of a New Orleans second line. And their bandleader's artful and highly stylised performance will bring the ritualistic undercurrents which are so cherished an aspect of the Green Man experience very satisfyingly to the fore.

At the heart of this strictly black-clad ensemble, P.J. herself shimmers in midnight blue – ornately plumed accoutrements suggesting a high-fashion kinswoman of the Child Catcher in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. But it's the light and shade in her recent songwriting that stops this show from plunging into the mire of conflict-zone reportage rock. Given their complex and multifariously subsidised provenance, the songs from 2016's *Hope Six Demolition Project*, which make up the body of this set, can boast enduringly sturdy melodic foundations.

As demob happy food-stall workers improvise dance routines to a catchy chorus speculating on the number of infant deaths in Kosovo – The Wheel's slyly insinuating, "I heard it was 28,000" – the contradictions inherent in the presentation of human suffering as entertainment cannot be entirely overlooked. But given the ease with which the torrential flow of digital images sometimes enables us to process such disturbing realities, perhaps these lingering questions are no bad thing.

The two clearest flaws in an otherwise very impressive show are first, that the theatrical formality of the production seems to militate against any form of spontaneity, and second, that a setlist skewed to the shriller end of Harvey's vocal range sometimes – with the help of an atonal baritone sax flourish – raises the spectre of how Lene Lovich might have sounded if she'd recorded for ECM. But as the sepulchral backing vocals of the closing River Anacostia – "Your saviour's waiting patiently, walking on the water" – propel costumed torchbearers up the sodden hill to set fire to the Green Man, Christian and pagan iconography tonight an declare honourable draw. That battle is for life, not just for Christmas.

**Artful and highly stylised: Polly Harvey embraces the Green Man ritual; (bottom from left) black-clad band; P.J. shimmers.**

"DEMOB HAPPY FOOD-STALL WORKERS IMPROVISE DANCE ROUTINES."

Richard Gray/Empics Entertainment (2), Photosh

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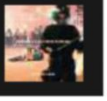

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SAT 02 DECEMBER
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MON 04 DECEMBER
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NEWCASTLE
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THU 07 DECEMBER
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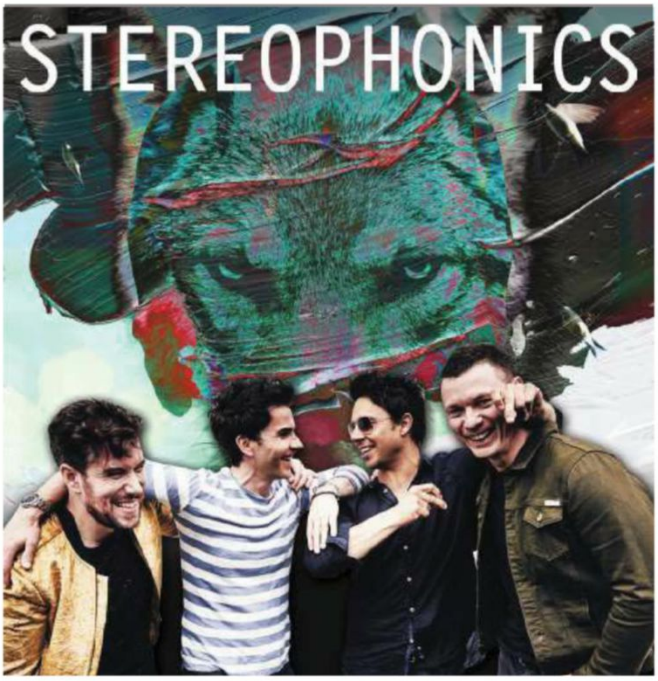

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SAT 24 FEB
GLASGOW
THE SSE HYDRO

MON 26 FEB
NOTTINGHAM
MOTORPOINT ARENA

TUE 27 FEB
BRIGHTON CENTRE

THU 01 MAR
BIRMINGHAM
GENTING ARENA

FRI 02 MAR
LONDON
THE SSE ARENA
WEMBLEY

MON 05 MAR
BOURNEMOUTH BIC

TUE 06 MAR
CARDIFF
MOTORPOINT ARENA

WED 07 MAR
CARDIFF
MOTORPOINT ARENA

FRI 09 MAR
MANCHESTER ARENA

SAT 10 MAR
LEEDS FIRST
DIRECT ARENA

MON 12 MAR
NEWCASTLE
METRO RADIO ARENA

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NEW ALBUM 'SCREAM ABOVE THE SOUNDS' OUT 27 OCTOBER

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# Iron & Wine

TUE 13 FEBRUARY
BIRMINGHAM
SYMPHONY HALL

THU 15 FEBRUARY
MANCHESTER
BRIDGEWATER HALL

FRI 16 FEBRUARY
LONDON EVENTIM
APOLLO
HAMMERSMITH

ALBUM '**BEAST EPIC**'
OUT NOW VIA
SUB POP RECORDS /
BLACK CRICKET
RECORDING CO.

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AN SJM CONCERTS PRESENTATION
BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CAA

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# RICK WAKEMAN

## Piano Portraits In Concert

**OCTOBER 2017**
Mon 23 **BOURNEMOUTH** Pavilion Theatre
Wed 25 **DURHAM** Gala Theatre
Thu 26 **BOSTON** The Stump
Fri 27 **SOUTHEND** Palace Theatre
Sat 28 **HUNSTANTON** Princess Theatre
Mon 30 **WOLVERHAMPTON** Grand Theatre
**NOVEMBER 2017**
Wed 1 **CHELTENHAM** Town Hall
Thu 2 **BLACKBURN** King George's Hall
Fri 3 **NEW BRIGHTON** Floral Pavilion
Sat 4 **EDMONTON** Millfield Theatre
Sun 5 **CAMBERLY** Theatre
Tue 7 **CHATHAM** Central Theatre
Thu 9 **RHYL** Pavilion Theatre
Fri 10 **SOUTH SHIELDS** Customs House
Sat 11 **EVESHAM** Regal
Wed 15 **BILLINGHAM** Forum Theatre
Thu 16 **LOWESTOFT** Marina Theatre
Sun 19 **ISLE OF WIGHT** Medina Theatre
Wed 22 **STOKE ON TRENT** New Vic Theatre
Mon 27 **LONDON** Cadogan Hall

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A KILIMANJARO & FRIENDS PRESENTATION

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PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS **DUOTONE**

**NOVEMBER**
29 **WAKEFIELD** UNITY WORKS
30 **ST ALBANS** THE ARENA
**DECEMBER**
01 **CRAWLEY** THE HAWTH
03 **BASINGSTOKE** THE ANVIL
04 **GLOUCESTER** GUILDHALL
05 **YEOVIL** WESTLANDS
06 **CARDIFF** TRAMSHED
08 **BRIGHTON** ST GEORGES CHURCH
09 **ASHFORD** ST MARYS CHURCH
10 **PORTSMOUTH** WEDGEWOOD ROOMS
11 **NOTTINGHAM** RESCUE ROOMS
13 **FROME** CHEESE & GRAIN
14 **BEDFORD** CORN EXCHANGE
15 **COLCHESTER** ARTS CENTRE
16 **LONDON** UNION CHAPEL
18 **BIRMINGHAM** TOWN HALL
19 **GLASGOW** SAINT LUKES
20 **MANCHESTER** RNCM
21 **BURY ST EDMUNDS** THE APEX

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BY ARRANGEMENT WITH DMF MUSIC

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# RHIANNON GIDDENS

## THE FREEDOM HIGHWAY TOUR

+ KAIA KATER

NOVEMBER
17 LONDON O2 SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE
18 BRISTOL COLSTON HALL
19 BIRMINGHAM TOWN HALL
21 MILTON KEYNES THE STABLES
22 POCKLINGTON ARTS CENTRE
23 MANCHESTER BRIDGEWATER HALL
26 GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL
28 GATESHEAD SAGE

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A KILIMANJARO & DMP PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CAA

---

# MARK LANEGAN BAND

## 2017 UK Tour

+ Tenebrous Liar
+ Joe Cardamone

27/11 Bristol Trinity
28/11 Norwich The Waterfront
29/11 Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall
30/11 Newcastle Boiler Shop
01/12 Liverpool O2 Academy
03/12 Aberdeen Garage
04/12 Edinburgh Liquid Room
08/12 Leeds Church
09/12 Oxford O2 Academy
10/12 Southampton Engine Rooms
11/12 Brighton Concorde 2
12/12 London KOKO

Myticket.co.uk | Seetickets.com

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A Kilimanjaro & friends presentation by arrangement with X-ray

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**TUE 27 • BRIGHTON DOME**
**WED 28 • BRISTOL COLSTON HALL**

**MARCH 2018**
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**FRI 02 • CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE**
**SAT 03 • GLASGOW O2 ABC**

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S.J.M. CONCERTS PRESENTS

SJM CONCERTS BY ARRANGEMENT WITH RAN TOURING PRESENT

# SAINT ETIENNE

## CHRISTMAS TOUR 2017

**THU 30TH NOV**
**HOLMFIRTH**
THE PICTURE DOME

**FRI 1ST DEC**
**GLASGOW**
O2 ABC

**SAT 2ND DEC**
**MANCHESTER**
O2 RITZ

**FRI 8TH DEC**
**BRISTOL**
SWX

**SAT 9TH DEC**
**LONDON**
O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE

**SUN 10TH DEC**
**BEXHILL**
DE LA WARR PAVILION

GIGSANDTOURS.COM | TICKETMASTER.CO.UK

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SJM CONCERTS, OIB & DF BY ARRANGEMENT WITH SOLO PRESENT

# starsailor

## ALL THIS LIFE TOUR

THU 12 OCT | CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION
FRI 13 OCT | NORWICH WATERFRONT
SAT 14 OCT | BRISTOL BIERKELLER
MON 16 OCT | LEEDS BECKETT STUDENTS' UNION
TUE 17 OCT | BIRMINGHAM O2 INSTITUTE 2
WED 18 OCT | SHEFFIELD LEADMILL
THU 19 OCT | LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY
SAT 21 OCT | NEWCASTLE BOILER SHOP
SUN 22 OCT | GLASGOW O2 ABC
TUE 24 OCT | MANCHESTER O2 RITZ
WED 25 OCT | BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2
THU 26 OCT | LONDON KOKO

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THE TELEGRAPH

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# STEVEN WILSON

March 2018
Thu 15 Warwick Arts Centre
Wed 21 Cardiff St David's Hall
Thu 22 Birmingham Symphony Hall
Sat 24 Glasgow SEC Armadillo
Sun 25 Gateshead Sage
SOLD OUT London Royal Albert Hall
SOLD OUT London Royal Albert Hall

THIRD AND FINAL NIGHT ADDED DUE TO PHENOMENAL DEMAND
Thu 29 London Royal Albert Hall

SOLD OUT Manchester Bridgewater Hall
April 2018
Sun 01 Manchester Bridgewater Hall

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TO THE BONE
OUT NOW

PRESENTED BY SJM AND ARRANGED BY
VECTOR MANAGEMENT AND UNITED TALENT AGENCY

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# PAUL DRAPER

MON 19 FEB
**BRIGHTON THE HAUNT**
TUE 20 FEB
**PORTSMOUTH WEDGEWOOD ROOMS**
WED 21 FEB
**BRISTOL BIERKELLER**
FRI 23 FEB
**DUBLIN THE WORKMAN'S CLUB**
SAT 24 FEB
**BELFAST LIMELIGHT 2**
MON 26 FEB
**EDINBURGH THE CAVES**
TUE 27 FEB
**GLASGOW THE ART SCHOOL**

THU 01 MAR
**MANCHESTER O2 RITZ**
FRI 02 MAR
**SHEFFIELD THE LEADMILL**
SAT 03 MAR
**NEWCASTLE RIVERSIDE**
MON 05 MAR
**NOTTINGHAM RESCUE ROOMS**
TUE 06 MAR
**NORWICH THE WATERFRONT**
WED 07 MAR
**OXFORD O2 ACADEMY 2**
THU 08 MAR
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THURSDAY 23 NOVEMBER SOLD OUT
MANCHESTER O2 APOLLO

FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER
WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC HALL

SUNDAY [illegible] NOVEMBER SOLD OUT
MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER
LONDON O2 ACADEMY BRIXTON

WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER
SOUTHAMPTON O2 GUILDHALL

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27 Jan GLASGOW SEC Armadillo
28 Jan EDINBURGH Usher Hall
2 Feb CARDIFF St David's Hall
3 Feb BIRMINGHAM Symphony Hall
4 Feb BOURNEMOUTH Pavilion
9 Feb HARROGATE International Centre
11 Feb LIVERPOOL Philharmonic Hall
16 Feb YORK Barbican
17 Feb NOTTINGHAM Royal Concert Hall
22 Feb BRISTOL Colston Hall
23 Feb LEICESTER De Montfort Hall
24 Feb LONDON Palladium
1 Mar MANCHESTER Bridgewater Hall
4 Mar GATESHEAD The Sage
9 Mar BASINGSTOKE The Anvil
10 Mar OXFORD New Theatre
11 Mar SOUTHEND Cliffs Pavilion
16 Mar PRESTON Guild Hall
17 Mar SHEFFIELD City Hall
18 Mar MILTON KEYNES Theatre
22 Mar GUILDFORD GLive
24 Mar MARGATE Winter Gardens

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Out now

THU 19 OCT BIRMINGHAM Symphony Hall
SAT 21 OCT LONDON Palladium SOLD OUT
SUN 22 OCT MANCHESTER Opera House
MON 23 OCT GATESHEAD The Sage
— 2018 DATE JUST ADDED —
FRI 27 APR LONDON PALLADIUM

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PLUS VERY SPECIAL GUESTS

SAT 17 FEB BRIGHTON CENTRE - SOLD OUT
SUN 18 FEB BOURNEMOUTH INTERNATIONAL CENTRE
TUE 20 FEB PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS
WED 21 FEB CARDIFF MOTORPOINT ARENA
FRI 23 FEB LEEDS FIRST DIRECT ARENA
SAT 24 FEB NEWCASTLE METRO RADIO ARENA
SUN 25 FEB GLASGOW THE SSE HYDRO
TUE 27 FEB NOTTINGHAM MOTORPOINT ARENA
THU 1 MAR MANCHESTER ARENA
FRI 2 MAR BIRMINGHAM GENTING ARENA
SAT 3 MAR LONDON THE O2

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3 DAYS OF NUTTINESS! LIVE BANDS · DJ'S COMEDY & MORE

## HOUSE OF FUN
WEEKENDER

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EVERYONE'S A FRUIT & NUTCASE

**MADNESS**

STEVE HARLEY & COCKNEY REBEL

CRAIG CHARLES

A RUB A DUB REGGAE SESSION FEATURING TIPPA IRIE
DENNIS ALCAPONE & MICHAEL PROPHET WITH THE LOCKDOWN BAND
OH MY GOD! IT'S THE CHURCH
WIGAN CASINO PRESENTS RUSS WINSTANLEY • DIANE SHAW & ALAN KING
DENNIS BOVELL • GENO WASHINGTON & THE RAM JAM BAND
DESMOND DEKKER'S BAND 'THE ACES' FEATURING DELROY WILLIAMS
ROXY MUSIQUE • THE RHYTHM METHOD • THE INFLATABLES • THE GAS TANKS • THE GALLERYS
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RIOT JAZZ BRASS BAND • DJ KING REBSKA • DJ JERRY BLESS • MR HAPPY
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**HAPPY MONDAYS / EMBRACE**
**LEVELLERS / THE WONDER STUFF**
**FUN LOVIN' CRIMINALS / STARSAILOR**
**PETER HOOK & THE LIGHT / THE FARM**
**THE WEDDING PRESENT**
A CERTAIN RATIO / POP WILL EAT ITSELF
SPACE / JIM BOB (CARTER USM) / WOLFGANG FLUR (EX KRAFTWERK)
THE ICICLE WORKS / FREAK POWER / FARLEY & HELLER
DUB PISTOLS / STEVE LAMACQ (DJ SET) / CORDUROY
BMX BANDITS / SULTANS OF PING FC / KINGMAKER (FOR A DAY)
SPACE MONKEYS / SMALLER / THE WOODENTOPS
HURRICANE #1 / IAN PROWSE (PELE/AMSTERDAM) / CUT LA ROC
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**Fairport Convention**
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The Way Of Music presents

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A Boutique Indoor Music Festival

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**Wild Beasts**
**British Sea Power**
**The Orb**
**Alabama 3**
**Peter Hook & The Light**
**Gang of Four**
**Honeyblood**
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**She Drew The Gun**
**Helen Love**
**Desperate Journalist**
**Yonaka**
**Plus many more**

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*3 seaside locations | Legendary artists performing live | Over 18s only | 3 nights accommodation | Deposits from only £15pp*

Prices shown are per person per break based on four adults sharing a Silver self-catering Apartment and include all discounts and £s off. Prices are correct as of 04.09.2017 but are subject to availability. Act line-ups are correct at time of print but are subject to change. From £15 per person deposit is only valid when using the Auto Pay feature and applies to new bookings only when booking more than 84 days before break start date. Deposits are non refundable and your final payment will be debited 12 weeks before you arrive. All offers are subject to promotional availability, may be withdrawn at any time and cannot be combined with any other offer or internet code except the 5% Premier Club loyalty discount. For full terms and conditions please visit butlins.com/terms. Calls to 03 numbers are charged at standard UK rates and may vary from mobiles. These calls are included in any inclusive packages. Butlin's Skyline Limited, 1 Park Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 4YL. Registered in England No. 04011665.

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2018

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## NED'S ATOMIC DUSTBIN

GUEST DJ SET FROM

**GRAHAM CRABB** PWEI POP WILL EAT ITSELF

THURSDAY 29th MARCH
**LIVERPOOL**
**O₂ ACADEMY**

FRIDAY 30th MARCH
SATURDAY 31st MARCH
**LONDON**
**O₂ SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE**

SUNDAY 1st APRIL
**LEICESTER**
**O₂ ACADEMY**

WEDNESDAY 4th APRIL
**LEEDS**
**O₂ ACADEMY**

THURSDAY 5th APRIL
**NEWCASTLE**
**O₂ ACADEMY**

FRIDAY 6th APRIL
**GLASGOW O₂ ABC**

SATURDAY 7th APRIL
**MANCHESTER**
**O₂ RITZ**

THURSDAY 12th APRIL
**BRISTOL**
**O₂ ACADEMY**

FRIDAY 13th APRIL
**BOURNEMOUTH**
**O₂ ACADEMY**

SATURDAY 14th APRIL
SUNDAY 15th APRIL
**BIRMINGHAM**
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THEWONDERSTUFF.CO.UK | NEDSATOMICDUSTBIN.COM

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# THE SOUTH

Performing the songs of The Beautiful South including 'A Little Time', 'Perfect 10', 'Rotterdam' and many more

**OCTOBER 2017**
SUN 22 **WOLVERHAMPTON** Robin 2 therobin.co.uk
MON 23 **STEVENAGE** Gordon Craig Theatre gordon-craig.co.uk
TUE 24 **WEYMOUTH** Pavilion weymouthpavilion.com

**NOVEMBER 2017**
THU 02 **HALIFAX** Victoria Theatre calderdale.gov.uk/victoria
FRI 03 **NEWARK** Palace Theatre palacenewark.com
SAT 04 **LONDON** O₂ Academy Islington ticketmaster.co.uk
THU 16 **READING** Sub Club subclub.co.uk
FRI 17 **HUNSTANTON** Princess Theatre princesshunstanton.co.uk
SAT 18 **SHEFFIELD** Plug the-plug.com
SAT 25 **HOLMFIRTH** Picturedrome picturedrome.net
WED 29 **RUNCORN** The Brindley thebrindley.org.uk
THU 30 **BURY ST EDMUNDS** Apex Theatre theapex.co.uk

A DMP presentation by arrangement with VAT Agency

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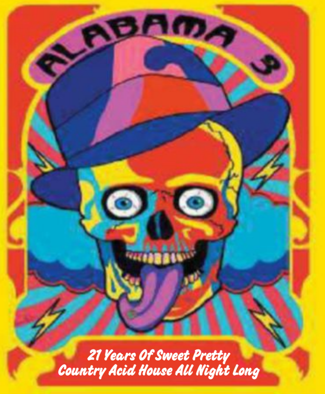

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS
**MARCH 2018**

THU 15 BIRMINGHAM $O_2$ ACADEMY
FRI 16 OXFORD $O_2$ ACADEMY
SAT 17 LEEDS $O_2$ ACADEMY
THU 22 NEWCASTLE $O_2$ ACADEMY
FRI 23 GLASGOW $O_2$ ACADEMY
SAT 24 MANCHESTER $O_2$ RITZ
THU 29 BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2
FRI 30 BRISTOL $O_2$ ACADEMY
SAT 31 LONDON $O_2$ FORUM KENTISH TOWN

ALABAMA3.CO.UK

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# HERMITAGE GREEN

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

THU 30 NOV LIVERPOOL $O_2$ ACADEMY2
FRI 01 DEC LONDON $O_2$ ACADEMY ISLINGTON
SAT 02 DEC BIRMINGHAM $O_2$ ACADEMY3
SUN 03 DEC GLASGOW $O_2$ ABC2

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BY ARRANGEMENT WITH NEIL O'BRIEN ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

# NICK HEYWARD

APRIL 2018
THU 05 **STOCKTON-ON-TEES** Arc
FRI 06 **GLASGOW** Oran Mor
THU 12 **CARDIFF** The Globe
FRI 13 **BATH** Komedia
FRI 20 **BIRMINGHAM** $O_2$ Academy2
SAT 21 **OXFORD** $O_2$ Academy2
FRI 27 **SHEFFIELD** $O_2$ Academy2
SAT 28 **LIVERPOOL** $O_2$ Academy2
MAY 2018
SAT 05 **LONDON** $O_2$ Academy Islington

WOODLAND ECHOES
OUT NOW

NICKHEYWARD.COM

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# JAKE CLEMONS

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

**TUE 24 OCT** GLASGOW $O_2$ ABC2
**WED 25 OCT** LIVERPOOL $O_2$ ACADEMY2
**THU 26 OCT** BIRMINGHAM $O_2$ ACADEMY3
**FRI 27 OCT** LONDON $O_2$ ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON
**SUN 29 OCT** BRISTOL THEKLA

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# THE VELVETS

Celebrating 50 years of the
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Performing classic songs
from 1967 - 1970

*Sat 30th Sept*
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*Sat 11th Nov*
**GLASGOW $O_2$ ABC2**

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PERFORMING
FOR THE
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THE ALBUM
**GEORGE BEST**
IN ITS ENTIRETY

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**$O_2$ ACADEMY LEEDS**
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ONLY
UK DATE
IN 2017

# SUN KIL MOON

SUNDAY
26TH NOVEMBER
$O_2$ SHEPHERDS
BUSH EMPIRE
LONDON

FULLY SEATED SHOW | SUNKILMOON.COM
NEW ALBUM "COMMON AS LIGHT AND LOVE ARE RED VALLEYS OF BLOOD" OUT NOW

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A Tribute to LEMMY

# motörheadache

plus special guests

FRI 20th OCTOBER
GLASGOW $O_2$ ABC2
SAT 21st OCTOBER
NEWCASTLE $O_2$ ACADEMY2
SAT 18th NOVEMBER
LONDON $O_2$ ACADEMY ISLINGTON
motorheadache.uk

---

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# THE Prince EXPERIENCE UK

FORMERLY KNOWN AS ENDORPHINMACHINE
NATIONAL TOUR 2017

OCTOBER
FRI 06 **NEWCASTLE** $O_2$ ACADEMY
SAT 07 **GLASGOW** $O_2$ ABC2
NOVEMBER
FRI 10 **SHEFFIELD** $O_2$ ACADEMY2
SAT 11 **MANCHESTER** ACADEMY
FRI 24 **NOTTINGHAM** RESCUE ROOMS
SAT 25 **BIRMINGHAM** $O_2$ ACADEMY2
DECEMBER
FRI 01 **LONDON** $O_2$ ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON
SAT 02 **OXFORD** $O_2$ ACADEMY2
SAT 09 **LIVERPOOL** $O_2$ ACADEMY2

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**November** 2017
**10 Dundee** Caird Hall*
**14 Bristol** $O_2$ Academy
**15 Brighton** Dome
**16 London** Roundhouse SOLD OUT
**17 Cardiff** Great Hall SOLD OUT
**18 Portsmouth** Pyramids Centre SOLD OUT
**22 Folkestone** Leas Cliff Hall SOLD OUT
**23 Norwich** UEA
**24 Southend** Cliffs Pavilion
**25 Cambridge** Corn Exchange
**28 Preston** Guild Hall
**29 Scunthorpe** Baths Hall
**30 Carlisle** The Sands Centre

# HAPPY MONDAYS

## 30th Anniversary
## Twenty Four Hour Party People
## Greatest Hits tour

Plus support JON DASILVA
* Except Dundee

**December** 2017
**01 Liverpool** Olympia
**02 Leeds** $O_2$ Academy SOLD OUT
**06 Birmingham** $O_2$ Institute
**07 Lincoln** Engine Shed
**08 Newcastle** $O_2$ Academy
**09 Nottingham** Rock City SOLD OUT
**13 Manchester** Academy 1
**14 Llandudno** Venue Cymru
**15 Dublin** Vicar Street
**20 Aberdeen** Beach Ballroom SOLD OUT
**21 Inverness** The Ironworks
**22 Kilmarnock** Grand Hall
**23 Glasgow** $O_2$ Academy

A DHP, Academy Events, PVC, Regular Music & Friends presentation

---

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PAYIN' RESPECT TO THE MAN IN BLACK

# CASH

WITH FULL LIVE BAND

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FEBRUARY 2018
SAT 03 LIVERPOOL $O_2$ ACADEMY2
SAT 10 OXFORD $O_2$ ACADEMY2
FRI 16 BIRMINGHAM $O_2$ ACADEMY3
SAT 17 SHEFFIELD $O_2$ ACADEMY2
SAT 24 LONDON $O_2$ ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON
MARCH 2018
FRI 02 BRISTOL $O_2$ ACADEMY
JUNE 2018
FRI 01 NEWCASTLE $O_2$ ACADEMY2
SAT 02 GLASGOW $O_2$ ABC2

---

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"THE WORLD'S GREATEST PEARL JAM TRIBUTE"

# Pearl Jam UK

"Rockin"
Dave Krusen
(Pearl Jam)

pearljamuk.com

NATIONAL TOUR 2017
OCTOBER
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Sat 14th **CARDIFF** GLOBE
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Sat 11th **LONDON** $O_2$ ACADEMY ISLINGTON
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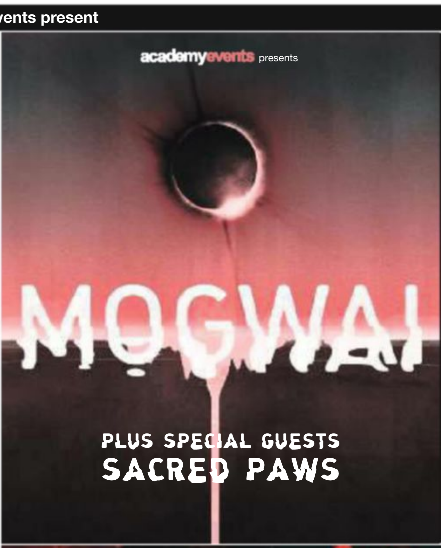

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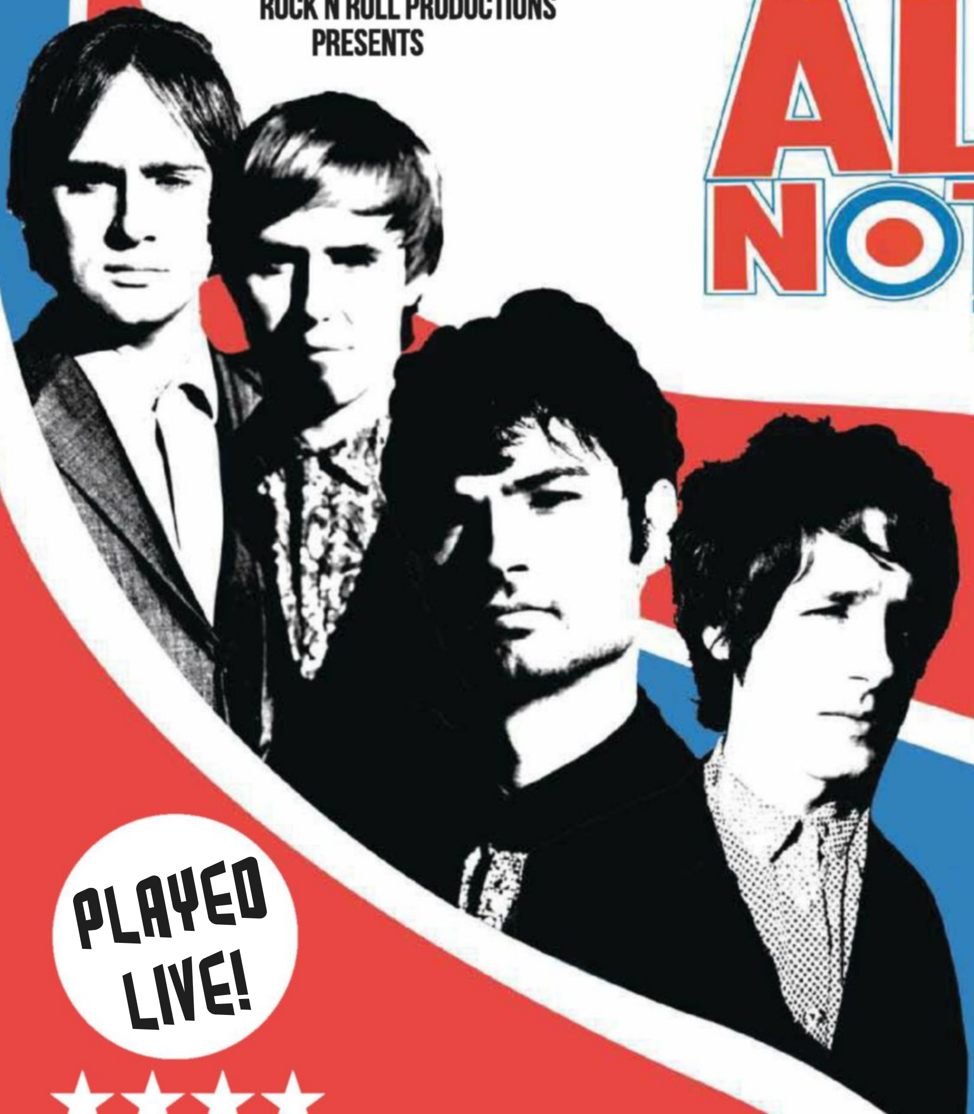

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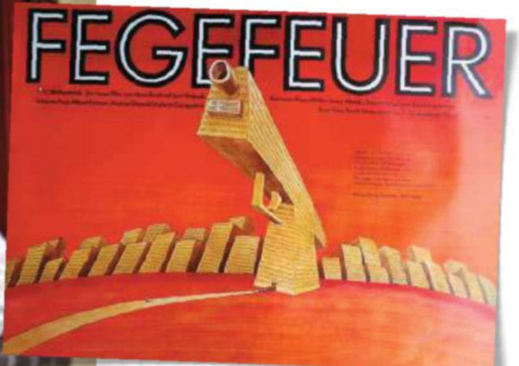

**HISSFACTORY**

# WERE ZZ TOP SAVAGED BY SNAKES?

All grist to the ever-grinding Dellar mill – it's reptilian rock, theme tune infamy and Bizarre Randy.

**Did ZZ Top once get chased off-stage by a maddened buffalo and assorted rattlesnakes, or is the whole story apocryphal?**

*Denny Moore, via e-mail*

**Fred Says:** The story regarding ZZ Top's 1976 Worldwide Texas Tour has remained in contention for years. A recap, for those who haven't heard the story: during 1976 the band headed out on an extensive tour, playing aboard a specially designed stage shaped like the map of Texas. For backdrops, it was said that they added an array of live animals; the menagerie included a 2,000-pound black buffalo, a long-horned steer, two trained vultures and a bunch of diamond-back rattlesnakes in a plexi-case. One night, the buffalo allegedly smashed open the snake case – at which point, Billy Gibbons and amigos understandably vacated the stage. But did this actually happen? The truth of the matter might lie in a confession by Top's animal handler, Ralph Fisher, who claimed: "We always made a spectacle before and after the show of putting the snakes in and out of the cage. We'd make sure one them would escape, get away from the handler for a second or two, and then we'd make a big show of recapturing the snakes. But it was all for the press… and it made good publicity. The headline would be 'Rattlesnake Escape Backstage At ZZ Top Concert.'" So we hate to break it you, but…

## DID ELAINE EVER COVER BOWIE?

**Please can you tell me if Elaine Paige ever covered a David Bowie song? The reason I ask this is both myself and my brother-in-law swear that we saw in the Record & Tape Exchange in Notting Hill circa 1990 in their rare records section an album of Bowie covers by said artiste.**

*Ian Fairbank, via e-mail*

**Fred Says:** I can't trace any Bowie cover by Elaine Paige. I believe that the album you saw at Notting Hill was not a collection of Bowie songs but rather *The Queen*, a collection of Queen songs sung by Paige that EMI released in 1988.

## WHAT WAS THAT BEATLES' RELEASE?

**When I was a kid I bought a Beatles record that had them, in their long-haired phase, standing in front of what looked like a castle wall, all big bricks and ivy (I think). It contained songs like Ballad Of John And Yoko, Rain, Lady Madonna and others. I was told this was a US release only. But what was this album called and would it be worth anything today if I still had it?**

*Gary Harman, Stockton, California, USA*

**Fred Says:** Yeah, I remember it, I owned a copy at one point. The original version, which stemmed from the States, was titled *Hey Jude*. Dreamt up by Allen Klein initially, it was a compilation of non-album and B-sides and was to be called *The Beatles Again*, a title that did appear on some copies. The cover you mentioned was shot at the front of John Lennon's home, Tittenhurst Park. Though the original vinyl issue was out of print by the late '80s, there were variations from numerous countries (Discogs lists 190 of them!). All of which means possessing a copy of *Hey Jude* won't gain your place on Forbes' rich list anytime soon.

**Snake, rattle and roll: (clockwise from main) ZZ Top watch out for reptiles; Supertramp in purgatory; Give Us A Clue's Lionel Blair and Grange Hill pupil Ziggy Greaves; Elaine Paige gets her Bowie face on; the Fabs outside Tittenhurst.**

## TRAMP IN PURGATORY

**The Supertramp soundtrack that DR Richard (MOJO 285) was seeking is probably not Extremes, which uses pre-existing recordings. It is Fegefeuer, directed by Haro Senft, filmed in Munich during July 1970, which has an original instrumental soundtrack by Supertramp. The English title is Purgatory. I saw a Purgatory screening at the British distributors in Soho. Though we had driven non-stop from Frankfurt and stayed awake, it was after lunch and the British executives just snored through it, woke up at the end and said, "Absolutely marvellous". There is also a short film, Daddy Portrait 1970 by Haro Senft, which was filmed live at the PN Club Munich in December 1969. (Supertramp) were actually playing as Daddy, and the name changed a few weeks later to Supertramp.**

*Peter Viney, via e-mail*

**Fred Says:** Reader Viney worked as Supertramp's roadie at the close of 1970. He ruefully remembers that, after the screening, the British executives took him out for coffee and then asked him to pay!

## WAS RANDY NEWMAN EVER IN HARPERS BIZARRE?

**The mention of Harpers Bizarre's version of Simon Smith And The Amazing Dancing Bear amid Andrew Male's excellent Randy Newman interview (MOJO 286) set off a few queries. Was Newman ever a member of Harper's Bizarre? How many songs did he write for them?**

*Charles Long, via e-mail*

**Fred Says:** Though Randy Newman was briefly a member of The Tikis, the group that eventually morphed into Harpers Bizarre, he was never part of the latter outfit. He did, however, supply them with a number of songs, six of which appeared on record: Simon Smith, Happyland, Snow, The Biggest Night Of Her Life, Vine Street and The Debutante's Ball, on which he played piano. Incidentally, Harry Nilsson is credited with contributing a vocal on the Bizarre's cover of his Poli High and, according to the Bizarre's Ted Templeman, also sang on Battle Of New Orleans.

## GIVE US A GRANGE HILL?

**Why did ITV's Give Us A Clue have the same theme tune as the BBC's Grange Hill in the early 1980s? I know it was a piece of library music, but weren't there rules about that sort of thing?**

*Paul Hurst, via e-mail*

**Fred Says:** Can any ITV executives tell us their reasoning? Grange Hill got there first, it seems!

**CONTACTFRED**

Write to: Ask Fred, MOJO, Fourth Floor, Academic House, 24-28 Oval Road, London NW1 7DT.

OR email Fred Dellar direct at fred.dellar@bauermedia.co.uk

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This month we have two Sphere 2 speakers (RRP £200 each) and two Sphere 4 (RRP £250) to give away. They're available in Black, White, Burgundy, Orange and Green. So complete Bigfoot Fred's crossword and send it to The Splendour Of Sphere, MOJO, Academic House, 24-28 Oval Road, London NW1 7DT. Please include your home address, email address and phone number, and say which colour Speaker you would like. The closing date for entries is **November 2**. For the rules of the quiz, see www.mojo4music.com. And, all those who enter the special competition discount code tibomojo25 at www.tibo-audio.com/mojomag will receive **a 25 per cent discount on the Tibo Chorus hi-fi products!**

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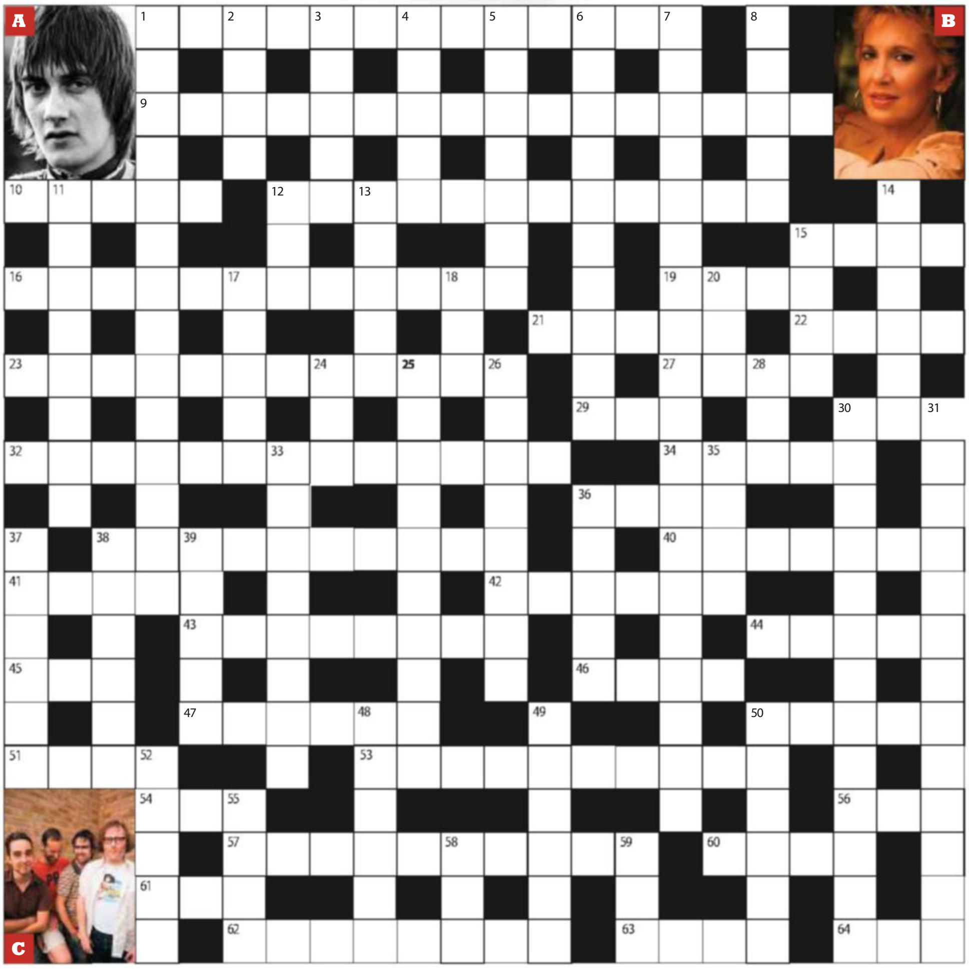
## ANSWERS

### MOJO 286

**Across:** 1 Brian Wilson, 6 MGMT, 10 Reckless Daughter, 13 Many A Mile, 15 Ian Broudie, 17 Born, 19 Vanian, 20 Fry, 21 Shepherd, 23 Gig, 24 Reply, 26 Boo Boo, 28 Rio, 29 Fischer-Z, 31 Pure, 32 Navajo, 33 Lariat, 35 Iowa, 37 Eye, 39 Beth Orton, 40 Meddle, 41 Europe, 42 Anita, 43 Defend, 44 Nails, 46 Sea, 47 Moist, 48 Sandie, 50 Lorca, 52 CCS, 53 Noakes, 55 Technical, 59 All Day And All, 60 Da Capo, 61 Stereo, 62 Strange Fruit

**Down:** 1 Barry Gibb, 2 I'm Coming Out, 3 Nils Lofgren, 4/12 It's A Sin, 5 Sad, 7 Guthrie, 8 Through The Wire, 9 Agents, 11 Soho, 14 Alamo Bay, 16 End, 17 Byron Lee, 18 Rap, 22 Rory, 25 Leap Of Faith, 27 Opal Mantra, 29 Footing, 30/45 Shine So Hard, 33 Legal Man, 34 Religion, 36 Prefab Sprout, 38 Eddie Vedder, 39 Bless, 43 Don, 46 Sack, 49 Art, 51 Gillan, 54 O'Jays, 56 Cadet, 57 Nyro, 58 Scar

**Winners:** **Peter M Connaughton** of **Burgess Hill** and **Steven Conway** of **Glasgow** each win a Tibo Choros multiroom hi-fi.



Alamy (3)

## ACROSS

**1** See photoclue A (4,9)
**9** Aerosmith's romance for a lift (4,2,2,8)
**10** January was great for them in 1975 (5)
**12** Jethro Tull's tale of Ronnie Pilgrim's spiritual journey (1,7,4)
**15** Johnny - well into hypnotism (4)
**16** See photoclue B (5,7)
**19** Spoon rice around for Slowhand (4)
**21** Influential hip hop producer/ rapper born Andre Young (2,3)
**22** Stringed instrument (4)
**23** Penitentiary recalled by Mose Allison and Georgie Fame (8,4)
**27** These Paris playthings were Stinky (4)
**29** --- Mo B There (James Ingram) (3)
**30** --- To Boy (Yazoo) (3)
**32** This Talking Heads' album had a plane cover (6,2,5)
**34** Peter or maybe even sister Jane (5)
**36** Braxton or Basil maybe? (4)
**38** Dylan LP spawned If Not For You (3,7)
**40** Warm-sounding Pat Benatar album (7)
**41** John who gave us to Sam Stone (5)
**42** The Shadows' native American hit (6)
**43** Quirky singer-songwriter known for his mouth-trumpet expertise (4,4)
**44** It's the only Yes album to feature Trevor Horn as lead vocalist (5)
**45** Rainbow man Ronnie James (3)
**46** *To ---- A Butterfly* (Kendrick Lamar) (4)
**47** He's the son of 15 across (6)
**50** Kevin who recorded the album Babble with Dagmar Krause (5)
**51** Iggy Pop's actual Wild Child (4)
**53** *Even If And -------- When* (Screaming Trees album) (10)
**54** Mod reforms for synth-pop duo (1.1.1.)
**56** --- Of Sight (Spiritualized) (3)
**57** XTC's first album on their own Idea Records label (5,5)
**60** Albarn, Coxon, James & Rowntree (4)
**61** See photoclue C (3)
**62** It was Badfinger's seventh album (8)
**63** Kirsty MacColl's Kinky cover (4)
**64** P.J.Harvey's arid release (3)

## DOWN

**1** His epitaph reads, 'Better a spectacular failure, than a benign success' (7,7)
**2** Nick located amid Electric Avenue (4)
**3** Giles, Giles and who? (5)
**4** Eloquent jazz pianist Bill (5)
**5** Their debut album was *The Thoughts of Emerlist Davjack* (3,4)
**6** "It's easy to see, it's easy to see" (Manic Street Preachers) (5,5)
**7** A Walker Brothers single or a Bulldog Drummond movie (8,4,3,4)
**8** Guthrie or maybe jazzman Herman (5)
**11** Subject of a Johnny Cash ballad (3,5)
**12** Could be Winehouse, could be Studt (3)
**13** A frog went crazy over this Harold Faltermeyer hit (4,1)
**14** Green Day single or Elgar variation (6)
**15** Phil, once pretender to Dylan's crown (4)
**17** Stones' bassist Bill (5)
**18** Folk metal band from the Faroes (3)
**20** --- Speedwagon (1.1.1.)
**24** The Flying ---, Grace Slick's nickname (3)
**25** She collaborated with Jay-Z on Empire State Of Mind (6,4)
**26** A Diana Ross' fashion-packed move (8)
**28** Repeat this for a Matt Bianco hit (3)
**30** Duran Duran's everyday earth (8,5)
**31** Seems like a 1999 release for 60 across (3,2,1,7)
**33** Gomez LP, shot into the Top 10 (2,3,3)
**35** Label launched Madonna's hits (4)
**36** Ill-dressed person sung about by Otis Redding and Carla Thomas (5)
**37** ------ John Koerner (6)
**38** It was Bert Jansch's fifth album (6)
**39** Van Morrison's Astral period (5)
**48** Lil Jon's instruction to duck (3,3)
**49** The Doors provided weird ones inside the gold mine (6)
**50** A Doobies album, or possibly one by Sinatra (6)
**52** Tim Buckley album named after a Spanish poet (5)
**55** Alice Cooper's final LP for Warner's (4)
**58** Albertine, once of The Slits (3)
**59** --- And Lonely (Secret Machines) (3)

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THISMONTH

# PENNY RIMBAUD AND CRASS

They began as drums-and-vocals punk outrage. But their anarcho-agitation landed them in peril…

## HELLO MID 1977

Initially it was just me and Steve [Ignorant, Crass vocalist]. The house [Dial House in rural Essex, which became the Crass HQ] had become empty and I was living on my own. One day a wastrel entered the building (*laughs*). I was in my thirties. He was 16, 17. He was a pissed-off working-class kid and I was a pissed-off middle-class man. Steve had seen The Clash in Bristol and at the end Joe Strummer had said, "If you think you can do better, make your own fucking band."

[Steve] came to Dial House, knowing I had a drum kit. It was just the two of us for about six months – just drums and vocals. We had no ambition whatsoever. Other people turned up and said, "Ooh, can we join in?" I'd been involved in free-jazz and poetry. With Steve the way I played drums was as rap music became – the drums following the vocal. We came up with songs that were on [the] *Feeding Of The 5000* [album]. So What, Do They Owe Us A Living? and so on… I had been listening to Patti Smith, but I hadn't heard much punk. I'd been a chorister as a kid and liked Benjamin Britten. Our track Sentiment (White Feathers) was based on Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream.

I wanted us to be called Stormtrooper. Rather wisely, Eve [Libertine, Crass vocalist] advised against that (*laughs*). The name [Crass] came from Bowie's Ziggy Stardust: "The kid was just crass." We had what became the Crass symbol before we formed the band, designed by Dave King – the ouroboros [snake image] swallowing its own tail and incorporating elements of the Christian cross, the Union Jack, a swastika. That would get us in trouble.

**Playing with a different Essex: Crass on-stage in the '80s (from left) Pete Wright, Penny Rimbaud, Steve Ignorant, Phil Free: (bottom) early days; (below) Penny today.**

"WE KNEW HOW DANGEROUS WHAT WE WERE DOING WAS."

## GOODBYE MID 1984

We'd always had the intention to cease as a band in 1984 – the Orwell thing. But it became unavoidable. The obscenity case brought against us in 1984 left us pretty much broke. [1981's *Penis Envy* was deemed obscene and removed from sale]. That cost us a lot of money. And it began to feel like there wasn't a lot more we could say. Before the Falklands [War] we genuinely thought there was the possibility of a true social rising, if not all-out revolution.

We were given classified information by a sailor who came back from the Falklands [War]. [This information featured in the 'Thatchergate tapes' – when Crass created a seemingly off-the-record taped conversation between Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, using edited real-life dialogue and which alluded to both the possibility of nuclear war and to the sinking of HMS Sheffield during the Falklands War.] The secret information on the sinking of the Sheffield came out on those tapes. We knew how dangerous what we were doing was. The tapes were done in absolute secrecy. We wanted to release them before the [June 1983] election. [The tapes were eventually released later in 1983 via a Dutch news agency.] The Observer rang up and said, "Do you know anything about these tapes? We think you did it." The house had been bugged, it must have been… We'd been just this punk band writing naughty lyrics about Jesus. But then we arrived in a position where we might be in danger.

The last gig we did was the miners benefit in Aberdare [in Wales] in 1984. We'd been on the front line for seven years. We were bust [financially]. Thatcher had been voted back in. We had to go back to the drawing board.

*As told to Roy Wilkinson*

*Penny Rimbaud's album of Wilfred Owen war poetry, What Passing Bells, is out on November 3 on One Little Indian.*

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“What is this that stands before me…”

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